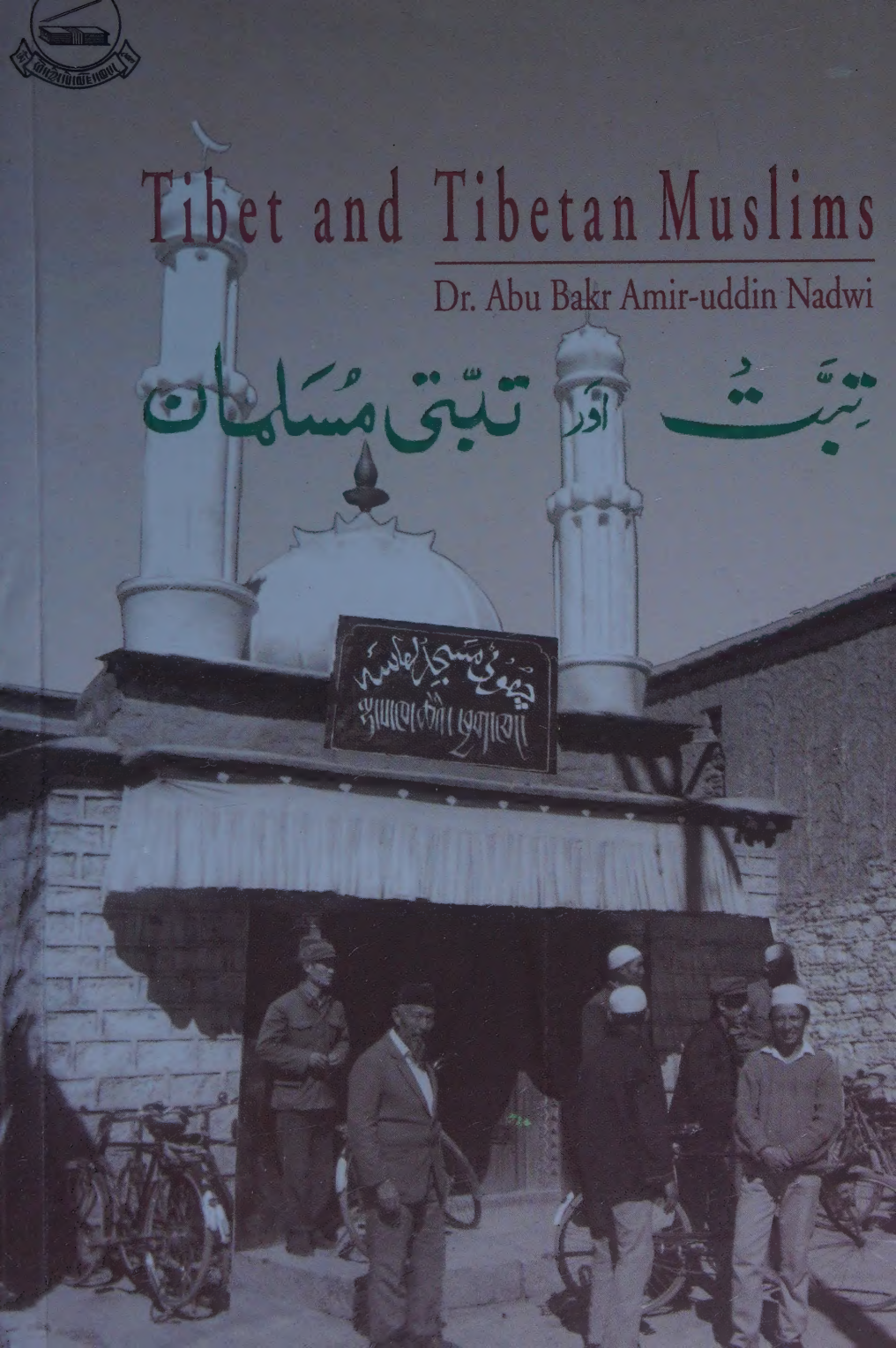
Tibet and Tibetan Muslims

Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi

تِبَّت اور تبّتی مُسلمان



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Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi

تبّت اور تبّتی مسلمان

از ڈاکٹر ابوبکر امیر الدّین تبّتی ندوی

Translated from Urdu

Prof. Parmananda Sharma

LIBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS AND ARCHIVES

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■ Publisher's Note

Tibet and Tibetan Muslims is a translation of the Urdu text originally written by Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi. It is the first ever book on Tibet that has been written in Urdu. This book not only serves as an introduction on Tibet prior to Chinese occupation but also highlights the early period of Tibetan history.

The initial section of the book is about the origin of the Tibet, its early kings, the emergence of the Dalai Lamas and so on. The middle section of the book narrates the propagation of Islam in Tibet and illustrates the harmonious co-existence of Buddhist Tibet with the early Muslim immigrants. The author illustrates how Islam as a religion was tolerated and sustained under a Buddhist nation.

The Muslim community of Tibet has not only witnessed the brutal occupation of Tibet by the Communist Chinese but some of them have also undergone the same sufferings as the Tibetans.

We are pleased to publish the translation of Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi's book *Tibbat aur Tibbati Musalman*, which narrates an unbiased historical accounts, though with certain variations in dates especially in the section of the early kings. The author has in Part I of this book mentioned that the title of the Dalai Lama was conferred on Gedun Drup, the 1st Dalai Lama. But in Part IV, he mentions that the title was conferred to the 3rd Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso, which is an accepted historical fact. The readers may come across such conflicting accounts and dates but this book being a translation, we have retained the information presented in the Urdu version. However, we have provided footnotes for the dates that differ with the generally accepted historical dates.

We would first of all like to thank Mr. Gyatsho Tshering the former Director of LTWA for initiating this translation project. We also thank him for his useful suggestions and for introducing us to Prof. James Millard, Department of History, Georgetown University, Washington D.C., who provided us with the introduction to this book. We would like to thank Prof. P. N. Sharma for translating the text from Urdu and Mr. Masood Butt, DIIR, CTA, for attending to our queries. We also would like to thank Ms. Tenzin Sonam and Tashi Yangzom for her assistance in preparing this book.

Tsering Namgyal
Publication Department
Library of Tibetan Works and Archives
Dharamsala, H.P. India

30th Octobet, 2004

Foreword

There are not so many materials available on the Muslims of Tibet, not even in the written source materials of Tibet in spite of the fact that they form a very visible segment of the Tibetan society. Tibetan Muslims belong to two distinct immigration groups. One group came from the east and remained mostly active in the Sining, Kokonor and the Amdo regions . Some of them eventually found their way to Lhasa. This group of Chinese Muslims, called Huis, were known to the Tibetans as Hopaling Khache (Muslims of the Hopaling quarter of Lhasa). The other group who originally came from the west, from Kashmir and Ladakh, were the ones whose lives were so intimately connected with the history of Tibet, and who became a part of the Tibetan fabric. Their immigration and settlement seems to have started at the time Ladakh was brought under Tibetan influence by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama . Ladakhi Muslims were concentrated in the three urban areas of Lhasa, Shigatse (Central Tibet) and Tsethang (South Tibet).

Islam thrived and coexisted in a country where ninety nine percent of the population were Buddhists. Under the munificent generosity and liberal rule of the Dalai Lamas, the community of Tibetan Muslims led a peaceful and constructive life, and contributed to the growth of the Tibetan societal development. They had their own mosque, and the Tibetan Government had provided them with lands for the burial of their dead, and all other amenities relevant to the practice of their faith. They had their own Council of Elders headed by a Chief known as Khache Ponpo to oversee the interests of the community and act as liaison with the various offices of the Tibetan Government. Except for their religion, Tibetan Muslims are out and out Tibetan in all other

respects. They are an integrated part of the social, economic, cultural and linguistic fabric of Tibetan society. One of the most outstanding features of their being a part of Tibetan society is that they are sole custodians of the purest and the most refined conversational dialect of Lhasa.

The Muslim cultural contribution has helped to enrich many aspects of Tibetan civilization. Some examples include the introduction of the classical opera songs called Nang-ma in Tibetan (based on the Urdu Nagh-ma); the drum and oboe music played during the Tibetan New Year Court dance of sGar-'cham; the contributions to Tibetan medical science by Muslim physician-scholars such as the famed Khache Panchen Dawa Gongah; and, the universally popular "Words of Advice" writings of the Muslim sage-scholar Khache Balu, so dear to all Tibetans. It is hoped that LTWA's continued effort to bring out such rare works as this translation of Dr. Abu Bakr Aniruddin Nadwi's book *Tibet Aur Tibbati Musalman* will encourage more studies and research focussing on the Muslims of Tibet. We all owe a deep gratitude to Prof. Permanand Sharma (a steadfast friend of mine) for his labour of love and for burning long hours of mid-night oil in the preparation of this translation. And, to Prof. James Millard for providing his excellent introduction to the book.

Gyatsho Tshering
Former LTWA Director
August 2004

Introduction

Tibet is well known as the home of Tibetan Buddhism, a school of Buddhism practiced in Nepal, Mongolia, parts of Russia, and increasingly in Western Europe and America as well as in Tibet. Tibet is also commonly thought of as a remote, almost eremitic Buddhist country, cut off from global historical currents until the advent of assertive Chinese policy regarding Tibet fifty-five years ago. The very phrase "Tibetan Muslim" may seem to many to be a contradiction in terms. In fact, however, Tibet has played a central role in Asian history, and has long been closely linked by commercial ties to neighboring Islamic areas, particularly in Central, West and South Asia. Moreover, communities of Muslims have resided in Tibet, some for long enough to merit the term "Tibetan Muslims."

Scholars have speculated for some time about ancient links between the peoples of Tibet and those further west. In this book, Dr. Nadwi discusses the mythological connections between Tibet and Southwest Asia as attested in Arab historical sources. Besides the legendary associations between the Yemeni king Tubba-ul-Agran and the name "Tibet" (there are other theories about the origins of the name "Tibet," including associations with the place name "Turfan" and the Tuoba or Tabghach people of Mongolia), there are hints of a linguistic relationship between Tibetan and Arabic, and a remarkable similarity in what may be called nomadic architecture: the Tibetan nomads employ a tent made of woven wool cloth raised on poles. In form, this Tibetan tent most resembles not the felt yurts of the Turko-Mongolians on the Eurasian steppes but the black tents of the Bedouin nomads of Arabia.

Tibet's direct contacts with the Islamic world began during the early eighth century, when the Tibetan empire, Tang dynasty, Turkic tribes, and the expanding Arab caliphate converged in a geopolitical struggle for power and influence in the Tarim Basin, the Pamirs, and Transoxiana. (This era has been thoroughly researched and narrated by Christopher Beckwith.[1]) At its height under Trisong Detsen (Khri-srong lde-brtsan, 755-797), the Tibetan empire warred with Arabs to the west and Chinese to the east; its influence extended from the Tianshan Mountains in the north to the (then Buddhist) Bengal kingdom in the south. Contemporary Arab writers referred to the Bay of Bengal as the "Tibetan Sea." From the ninth century on, however, the Tibetan empire, like the Tang before it, declined. From this point, the religion of Islam, though not the political or military power of the Caliphate, began to flow westward along from Central Asia into former Buddhist lands, a process that continued into modern times.

It was the confluence of Turkic military power and Islam, especially Sufism, that brought Muslim states to the southern, western, and northern frontiers of Tibet. Sufi missionaries were highly effective in making Muslims out of the nomadic tribesmen of central Eurasia, who in turn formed a series of new nomadic states in the tenth and eleventh centuries, from the Delhi Sultanate in the south to the Qaraqanid dynasty in the north. Just as Buddhism began its second dissemination in Tibet from the latter half of the tenth century, therefore, it was under assault on the Tibetan periphery, with the fall of the Buddhist city-state of Khotan ca. 1000 serving as the emblematic event: the silk road was now Islamic as far as east as Turfan, in eastern Xinjiang on the very border of China.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that surrounding Turkic Muslim states attempted to invade Tibet, as Dr. Nadwi describes here. Though successful in the Himalayan periphery—Ladakh, Baltistan, Kashmir—Islam never took hold in Tibet proper. What emerges most strongly from Dr. Nadwi's account, moreover, is not the military-political struggles but the commercial legacy of Muslim traders from Kashmir, Ladakh, Nepal and China in exchanging goods from

1. Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

India, China and elsewhere with those of Tibet, and as such serving as a link with neighboring societies. That they enjoyed legal and cultural protections under the Dalai Lamas' theocratic government is a testimony to this important role.

Of these Tibetan Muslim groups, Dr. Nadwi devotes the most attention to the Kashmiris, known in Tibet as Khache. (Khache are also treated in a recent book edited by Gray Henry.[2]) Missing in Nadwi's account, however, is a full discussion of the major Muslim presence in northeastern Tibet, or Amdo (also known as Qinghai or Kokonor). This region, which borders the Chinese province of Gansu, is home for several Turkic and Chinese Muslim groups, many of which have intermarried with Tibetans. This region was an important point of entry for Sufism into Tibetan territory, and perhaps among Tibetan-speakers as well, owing to the missionary efforts of Naqshbandi shaykhs in the seventeenth century.[3] The Amdo-Gansu border region remains an Islamic center; the city of Linxia, a short distance from the Labrang monastery, is known as China's Mecca. Restaurants and shops run by Chinese Muslims, may still be found today throughout the Tibetan plateau. As with the Kashmiris and other Muslim Tibetan groups in the past, the Huis continue to play a role as commercial and cultural intermediaries, living among Tibetan neighbors.

Research into the historical connections between Tibet and Islamic states, like the study of Tibetan Muslims themselves, remains in its infancy. We must thus thank the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives for making Dr. Nadwi's material available to a broader audience.

James Millward
Washington, DC
July 2004

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2. Gray Henry, ed., *Islam in Tibet & the Illustrated Narrative Tibetan Caravans*, with a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Louisville, Kentucky: Fons Vitae, 1997).
3. See Thierry Zarcone, "Sufism from Central Asia among the Tibetans in the 16-17th Centuries", *The Tibet Journal* (Dharamsala) 20:3 (1995): 96-114.

Preface

Tibet had always remained aloof from the other countries of the world and due to its difficult terrain and track, very few had succeeded in reaching there. Not many, therefore, know the true history and culture of Tibet. But after the Communist China's military invasion and the Dalai Lama's and other Tibetans' flight to India, the Question of Tibet has become an important issue on the world stage, and much has been written on it.

Though many things have been published on this subject in many different languages, particularly English, apart from the ancient Arab geographers and historians, none have mentioned anything about the Tibetan Muslims. The relationship between Arab and Tibet is very old. In the views of few Arab historians, it was the Yaman's king "Tubba-ul-Agran" who started the first human settlement in Tibet and laid the foundation of the Tibetan kingdom. I have given the Arab historians views on this in detail in the ensuing pages.

It is sad that nothing has been written on the Tibetan history in Urdu. During my schooling at Nadwa, I had wished to write on Tibet and Tibetan Muslims in Urdu. In the present book, I have tried to present the history of Tibet and the situation of Tibetan Muslims with factual information.

I have attempted to highlight the history, tradition and culture of Tibet and the Tibetan Muslims. If this small attempt of mine were received well, then, God willing, in the future too, I would pursue my research to further highlight the different aspects of this subject.

To authenticate my research on this subject, I had to locate various sources on the subject from the books in Arabic, English, Persian and

Urdu. The books that I have referred to are listed at the end of this book.

Readers will then access how much I have succeeded in my endeavour.

I am grateful and indebted to Maulana Sayyad Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi for his guidance and inspiration during my school days and it is a driving force towards my destiny even today. In spite of health problems, he had listened to the manuscript of this book and made many invaluable suggestions.

I would also like to thank Mr. Sayeed Tabish, lecturer at the Amiruddaula Islamia College, Lucknow, for his useful suggestions, which helped me in completing this book on time.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the following persons for their assistance in the publication of this book: Dr. Shabir Ahmad Nadwi, Lecturer Lucknow University, Dr. Abdul Razzaq, Maulvi Ghayasuddin Nadwi, and Maulvi Mohammad Haroon Nadwi.

Abu Bakar Amir-uddin Nadwi
Lucknow
12 Ramzan 1399 A.H./15
August 1979 A.D.

Part I

Tibet: An Introduction

Origin, Geographical Location, Size, Population and Climate

Tibet is located in Central Asia, and it is the world's highest country. It is, therefore, known as the "Roof of the World."

Tibet is located at an average height of 16,500 ft above the sea level. Its valleys are at the height of 12,000 ft to 17,000 ft; its peaks are at 20,000 ft to 24,000 ft and mountain passes located at 16,000 ft to 19,000 ft.

Chinese Turkestan lies to the north of Tibet, China to the east and Kashmir and Ladakh to the west. To the south, Tibet shares its border with India, Nepal and Bhutan. Its total area is 2,333,125 square kilometres with a population of six million.

Geographically, it is divided into four regions:

1. U and Tsang (Central Tibet); the country's capital, Lhasa is located in this region;
2. Ngari Korsum (West and Southern Tibet)
3. Chang-Tang (Northern Tibet)
4. Kham and Chamdo (Eastern Tibet)

According to the religious history of Tibet, Tibet once lay under a sea. As the time passed, the water level dropped slowly and dry land appeared. The process continued till the whole country came out of the sea. The mountain peaks then started freezing and they were slowly covered with snow. Streams and rivers originated from the snowy peaks. As the snow melted away, it made the low-lying land fertile and vegetation started appearing on the fertile land. When the land became thick with trees and grass, wild animals started evolving. And then the

gods wished that human beings should now take birth. Hence, the god Chenre-Zig appeared in the form of a monkey and the goddess Doma emerged in the form of violent ogress. From them, six children were born. Of the six, three children were compassionate like their father and three displayed (bore) the mother's violent character. Their offspring made tremendous progress, and achieved development in their physical as well as mental characteristics during a big span of time, they reached the status of human beings. And in the form of human beings, they started to live in smaller groups.This description proves the geological evolution and Darwin's theory of evolution.

Because of its geographical make-up and various other characteristics, Tibet has many similarities with Switzerland. The land is dotted with natural lakes, rivers, mountains, etc., which forms a magnificent view. Big rivers such as Brahmaputra, Sutlej, Indus, Kosi and Ganga, etc., have their source in Tibet. Besides this, big lakes are found in large numbers, Mansarover being the most famous one.

Mansarover

River Kali delineates Nepal and Almora and passes through its valley, called "Khai La" which is situated at a significant altitude from the sea level. You can see the ranges of Himalayan mountain from Khai La, which has no comparison in the world of their magnificence. The mountain ranges meet with the Tibetan plateau. Kailash mountain is situated there. Kailash is sacred to the Hindus. They believe that Kailash is the abode of Lord Shiva and a source of human happiness.

It is a common believe for the Hindus and Buddhists that every peak and river including the smallest stream is the sacred abode of god. There is a lake between the two peaks, which is known to the world as Mansarover. It is believed that a drop from this lake is enough to wash away your sin. At a walking distance from there, you can see the snowy peaks of Badrinath and Gangotri. Hindus believe that you can achieve the status of Brahma by rubbing Mansarover's soil on your body and taking a dip into Mansarover. And if you drink its water, you will reach Shiva's heaven and absolve yourself of the sin you have committed in hundred lives. Likewise, this lake is also sacred to the Tibetan people. They believe that you can visualise your future by looking into this lake.

Climate

Different climatic conditions prevail in different regions of Tibet. It is terribly cold in the north and much warmer in the south. Climatic condition in central Tibet variates between these two extremes.

Though it is dry and cold for most part of the year it is severely cold in winter. All the rivers, streams and lakes remain frozen during winter. Summer is often very pleasant and it receives significant rainfall during this season.

■ Origin of the name 'Tibet'

Ancient historians have variously named this country as 'Tehbat' and 'Taibat,' but the famous Arab historian Yagut Hamir, in his book 'Maajam-al-baldan,' refers to it as 'Tabbat,' 'Tibet' and 'Tubbat' although he normally preferred 'Tibet' to the other two nomenclatures. The oldest references to Tibet and the Tibetan kingdom in Arabic literature have their origin in Turkish sources. Arabic history books of the time when the Tubba dynasty ruled over Yemen are full of references to Tibet-Arab relations. Therefore, Arab historians believe that it was the great Yemen ruler Tubba-ul-Agran who first colonised Tibet; the Tibetan kingdom had thus its origins in Yemen. Ancient Tibetan kings wore the title 'Tubba' with their names. It was this title which later came to be identified with the geographical boundaries of the land they administered, and the rulers assumed the title of 'Khaqan.' Yaqut Hamir explains the nomenclature of Tibet as follows:

It is said that Tubba-ul-Agran started from Yemen, crossed the Jihun river and marched up to Samarkand. Finding the area uninhabited, he founded a city there, rested for a few days and then proceeded towards China. After a month's journey he reached a fertile land with abundance of water. Here too he founded another city and thirty thousand of his men, who were not fit to travel onwards to China, were left behind to colonise the place. He named this place 'Tibet.'

Dible-bin-Ali Al-Kharai, the Arabic poet, proudly refers to this event when, in A.D. 860. He addressed the following verses to Kummet, a rival poet: "These are the people who put their imprint on the gates of Marau as also on the portals of China; these are the people who first gave Samarkand its name; Tibet also was founded by them." Ibn

Khaldun also refers to Tubba-ul-Agran in his books as the king who had left behind in China men of the Hamir race whose descendants still live there. Abu Mohamed Abdul Malik bin Hushan, in his work 'Al-tijan Fi Maluk-e-Hamir,' when referring to Tubba-ul-Agran, writes in some detail:

> King Tubba-ul-Agran decided to invade China, vowed to lead his armies, organised a large expeditionary force and set out on his errand. His army also included soldiers of his own race, Banno Hamir, from Yemen. Following the footsteps of his grandfather Raish, he marched east-ward along the coast. Reaching Khorasan he left his grand-father's trail, turned to the right and reached Kayak to enter China. He collected a lot of booty, reduced many to the sword, took others as prisoners and spread destruction and ruin everywhere. The entire expedition took seven years and ten months. He left a successor behind in Baeh-bin Albinat, one of his highly trusted lieutenants, along with 12,000 soldiers, who settled down permanently in the land.

The accounts of all these Arab historians lead to one unanimous conclusion: King Tubba-ul-Agran had invaded China, and he had left behind remnants of Bani Hamir people as permanent settlers at some place. However, these historians have not pin-pointed the area of these alien settlers. The account of Yaqut Hamvi fills this gap by saying that Tabba-al-quran had left the Hamirs in Tibet and that they were the ones who colonised Tibet. This assertion is corroborated by Abu Mohamed Abdul Malik bin Hushan's statement in his book: "The inhabitants are, in fact, of Arab origin and they have a holy place where they worship and circumambulate seven times. They observe the ritual of fasting for one month during the year."

Referring to the Tubba kings, Mohamed Farid Wajdi has said:

> Tubba kings belong to Banno Hamirs who lived in Yemen. They are called 'Tabbaiya' from the custom of one succeeding the other. When a king died, he was immediately replaced. He was called 'Tubba' only when he became the ruler of Yemen. The first king of this race was Qahtan-bin-Amar-bin-Saleh who was crowned in 2030 B.C.

■ Tubba

Allama Sayed Suleman Nadvi, in his 'Arzul Quran,' refers to the word 'tubbe' and the 'tubbe' race in the context of the Quran.

The word 'tubba,' according to the dictionary, is connected with the Arabic 'tubba' or 'tabiat' and may be linked with the Arabic word 'matbuh,' that is, he who commands obedience. However, according to latest research, 'tubba' is a Hebrew word which means dominant, aggressive, powerful. It is the equivalent of the word 'sultan' in Islamic parlance.

■ The Quran and Tubba

The Tubba race is referred to twice in the holy Quran in the context of power, aggressiveness and grandeur. The first 'ayat' refers to the Quraish tribe: "What powers do they boast of? What became of those earlier people like Tubba who were even more powerful and sturdy (than the Quraish)?"

"Before them was denied (The Hereafter) by the People of Noah, the Companions of the Rass, the Thamud. The Ad. Pharaoh, the Brethern of Lut, the Companions of the Wood, and the People of Tubba, each one (of them) rejected the messengers, and My warning was duly fulfilled (in them)." (*Surat Qaf - 50:12-14*)

"What! are they (Quarish) better than the people of Tubba and those before them? We destroyed them because they were guilty of sin." (*Surat Ad-Dukhan - 44:37*)

This also proves that the word 'tubba' is better interpreted as 'full of powers' and 'sturdy' than as 'commanding obedience'.

■ Hamir

An ancient race of South Arabia, the Latin and the Greek writers called it 'Homeritae' and 'Tai' respectively. Inscriptions discovered in South Arabia and written in the native script are generally termed as 'Himyaritie.' They belong to different periods from 700 B.C. to A.D. 550. Allama Sayed Nadvi, however, states in his Arzul Quran, "The history of Hamir rulers commences from 100 B.C. and as Zoonawas died in A.D. 525, the total period of the reign of Hamir kings is 550 years."

Kings of the Hamir dynasty had the primary denomination of Hamir and were later named 'Tubba.' In fact, Tubba was a section of Hamirs who became kings during the later years of Hamir rule.

The image of Nurr was the family god of the illustrious Hamir dynasty. This god had been worshipped for long by Sa races. The Babylonians also worshipped a god called Nasruk whose statue has been recently excavated in Babylonia.

In the light of the aforementioned historical accounts, it may be safely concluded that the earliest settlers in Tibet were those Arabs who had migrated there several centuries before Christ. The Tibetan dress, especially that of lamas, the routine daily living of the people, the structure of their houses, the custom of circumambulatory rounds in Lhasa etc. partly reflect the influence of Arab civilization. The Tibetan name Boe (Bod) for Tibet itself means 'run-away' and corroborates the theory that it was colonised by people who had migrated from another country.

■ The Geographical Status of Tibet, China and India in the Eyes of Arabs

We would like to reproduce here the assertions of Arabs with respect to the geographical status of Tibet, China and India and their defined boundaries. The Arab view point is significant because Arab caravans used to travel via Samarkand, Chinese Turkestan, Kashghar, Ladakh and Kashmir to Tibet for trade and commerce. The accounts of geographers and travellers throw a great light on the geographical and political status of Tibet because they are based on solid observation and not mere hearsay. Tibet, which has been made a victim of its imperialism by China today and which is being denied even internal autonomy, once enjoyed a status as great as, or even greater than, that of China. Kitabul-blan says, "Tibet is larger than China. It has a very powerful government. Its people are very brave and wise and are a match for the Chinese in industry and sagacity. They are very powerful and none dare fight them."

Probably, this refers to the period when Tibetan boundaries spread as far as Chinese Turkestan and Sinkiang. It also proves the fact that Tibet has never been a part of China and that it has had no racial, cultural or political relationship with China. On the other hand, Tibet was as big or even bigger than China both in area and political supremacy. Its status was always that of an independent country.

Another Arab historian, Massaudi, has this to say in his book Muravjul-zahab, "The territory of Tibet is entirely independent and apart from China. The Hamir dynasty has dominance over it."

He continues further, "The influence of Hamiri language here was very perceptible in the beginning. As times changed, the language also

underwent transformation, and the local dialects came under the influence of the tongues of neighbouring countries."

Referring to the boundaries of China, Yaqut Hamir also says:

> China has land boundaries on three sides and sea boundary on one side. One land boundary is under the control of Turks and Tafarghiz people, and they are always at war with the Chinese. The second boundary is with Tibet, and a mountain ridge separates China from it. Both countries have their military checkposts on ridge tops to defend their boundaries. Their third boundary is with Mansas which too has its own government and is almost as large as China itself.

The above statements clearly prove that Inner Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, Sinkiang and Tibet were never a part of China. On the other hand, these were separate and independent governments, and each one of them was at loggerheads with China. Tibet and China, especially, had a standing political rivalry, and because of it, both had to maintain military cantonments on the border in order to safeguard their territorial integrity.

As for India, Tibet's relations with that country have been very strong and durable since time immemorial. The glory and greatness of Gautama Buddha's personality has greatly helped in bringing close to one another both the countries and their people. The Tibetans used to make frequent pilgrimages to Gaya in Bihar, and Indian Buddhists used to visit Tibet. Both countries remained constantly friendly and sympathetic towards one another.

Besides, the explicit and implicit accounts by Arab geographers and historians amply point out that, if not politically, at least culturally, Tibet was always considered very close to India owing to its proximity with the northern boundaries of India. No doubt, it shared a common boundary with China also, but as already mentioned, there was always political rivalry between the two, and they had to maintain military posts on the frontier. Contrary to this, there is no evidence of any such rivalry having ever existed between India and Tibet. The statement of Ibn Haukal is significant in this context. "The territories of India spread from Makran, Mansura and the whole of Sindh to Kannauj and a further four months journey up to Tibet." Astakhri, a contemporary of Haukal, also speaks

of Ladakh and Tibet and says, "The area of Hindustan, length-wise, stretches from the territory of Makran to Mansura, Buddha (Ladaha), the whole of Sindh and Kannauj. It goes up to Tibet which involves a journey of about four months."

In confirmation of this statement, 'Kitabul-zakhair' says that when the Muslims re-occupied Sindh during the times of Wasaq Billah, the precious gifts which the governor of Sindh offered to him included Tibetan armour, steel arm-bands and bracelets. It would not have been possible to send Tibetan armour to India in such large quantities that they could be even given as gifts, but for the spirit of political amity between the two countries. This is further emphasized by the fact that some of the most important rivers of India like the Brahmaputra, the Sutlej, the Kosi, the Ganga and the Indus have their sources in Tibet.

■ The race

It is generally believed that racially the Tibetans belong to the Turk, Mongol and Aryan stocks. The Arabs think they are from Sami race. It has again and again been repeated in Arabic accounts that the Tibetan population is a mixed breed of Yamenic Arabs and Turks. The Tibetan people have broad foreheads, snub-noses, and sunken eyes. They are of medium height with their faces closely resembling Mongols. Kindhearted, broad-minded, hospitable, brave and contented, they are very cultured. Tibetan is the language of these people, and its script closely resembles those of Hindi and Brahmi. It has a great treasure of books, mainly comprising religious hymns and translations of Buddhist works and canonical texts. It has a vast reservoir of literature and arts. Different dialects are spoken in different parts of the country, but the Lhasa dialect is considered to be most polished and standard.

■ Dress and food habits

Tibetans commonly wear a kind of gown with long sleeves called 'Chupa' in Tibetan. It is made of thick cotton cloth for the summer and of woolen cloth or sheep-skin for the winter. A shirt or a sweater or underwear is worn under it. It is secured with a silk band called 'kerya' at the waistline. Just as Indian women put vermilion mark on the parting

line of hair, so do Tibetan women tie a typical coloured apron on the upper front of their gowns. It is called 'pangden' in Tibetan. Men wear different types of hats.

Barely flour and meat are the staple diet of the people. Barley flour is used in a variety of ways. Generally, it is mixed with salted tea and butter and then kneaded to be shared in small cups. It is both delicious and nutritious. Tibetans call it 'Pa' (Pag), meat preparations are also numerous. Many Tibetan dishes are similar to Chinese cuisine. Tibetans drink tea in abundance, but Tibetan tea is a special preparation with an admixture of milk, butter and salt. Dry meat is a favourite dish with the Tibetans. Salted pieces of meat dried in the wind become a fine delicacy, called Sha-kampo in Tibetan. 'Chang,' distilled from barley is a favourite drink and is copiously consumed on festive occasions.

■ Produce and minerals

Tibet is a very fertile land, and wheat, barley, maize, peas and bajra grow in abundance here. Various vegetables and fruits are also grown. Peach, apple, orange, apricot, grape, pomegranate and walnut are plentiful, and honey, cheese, butter, milk and ghee (clarified butter) are ample.

Tibet has great reserves of salt, sulphur and gold besides various other minerals. Investigators have discovered large deposits of gold in northern and eastern Tibet. However, owing to a kind of religious taboo on mining, the country could not profitably utilise these precious reserves. The taboo arose from the fact that most of these deposits were located in the vicinity of monasteries and it was considered unethical to take advantage of these treasures; the nation was thus deprived of the use of these great gifts of nature. There was no restriction on digging out copper from which images of gods and goddesses were made. It is for this reason that the Tibetans consider copper to be superior to all other metals and holy too.

■ Animal and wild life

Tibet has a large population of wild life such as leopards, tigers, bears, stags, deer, yags and mules, and vast pastures for them. Some animals

have long and silk-soft hair from which shawls are woven. There is an abundance of ducks, pheasants, teals, peacocks, and other birds; of the animals, the yag and the musk-deer are the most important.

- **Yag (Yak)**

This animal resembles an ox and is of different complexions. It is high and broad in its front portion and has long hair on the body. The hair on its thighs are long enough to touch the ground. This abundant hair cover protects it from the cold. A nose-ring in its nostrils is used to control it. It as easily climbs mountains as other animals travel on land. The Britishers, mindful of its useful qualities, experimented with yag-rearing in India and England but could not succeed as the climate did not suit its breeding in either country.

The Yag fulfills various needs of the Tibetans because it can comfortably cope with extreme cold. It is used as a beast of burden and a means of transport. Dri (female of the yag) milk is a delicacy with the Tibetan people. Meat is dried and kept as reserve for winter and is even tastier than fresh meat. No salt or pepper is applied but pieces of meat are hung out as such to dry in the air. When dried, they can be preserved for months and become delicious to cook, and those going on long journeys carry reserves of such meat with them.

- **Musk deer**

Tibetan musk deer is a famous and rare species. Its habitat is high mountain peaks, and it is larger in size than the common deer. It is very swift and cunning. It has a pouch in the navel which contains musk. This musk is famous all over the world.

There are three types of musk:

(a) That which is hard as stone and is firmly stuck in the pouch. Qualitatively, this musk is the best.
(b) The second quality musk is granular and is commonly sold in India.
(c) The third kind of musk is in liquid form.

■ Livelihood

Agriculture and trade are the chief means of livelihood for Tibetans. Generally they have trade dealings with India, Bhutan, Nepal, Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan and, to some extent, with China. The exports to these countries consist of wool, musk, sulphur, tea, rugs, incense, turquoise, coral, silver and gold, and in exchange, Tibet imports daily necessities of life from them, such as textiles, sugar, rice, leather and general merchandise from India; woolen rugs, silk, opium, Badakhshani and Yarkandi horses etc. from Chinese Turkestan via Ladakh.

In addition to agriculture and trade, Tibetans rear animals such as sheep, yag, mules and horses. Dogs and boars are also seen in all houses along with poultry-farming.

■ Lhasa

Lhasa is the capital of Tibet, and the name is a combination of two words, Lha (god) and sa (earth) meaning 'the place of gods.' Situated at a salubrious location on the Tsangpo (Brahmaputra), there are other streams also flowing in its vicinity. It is believed that the city was founded by the famous king Songtsen Gampo (A.D. 620-680)[1]. He founded it in A.D. 639 and named it 'Lhaldun' which later came to be called Lhasa. In addition to being the capital of Tibet, it is also its biggest trade centre. All the important Buddhist temples and monasteries, historical monuments and the palaces of the Dalai Lama are situated here. No doubt, the Tibetans regard Lhasa as a very holy city.

■ Potala palace

Tibetans hold the Potala palace in high religious esteem and eminence. It is 1900 ft. in length and taller than St. Paul's Cathedral in London. It has 490 rooms and 1335 windows and ventilators. Built entirely in stone masonry, the lower half is white and the upper half is scarlet in colour. During winter, the Dalai Lama stays in its upper storey in a central room. Other rooms house the treasury and the state lockers. Some of the spacious rooms are always kept apart for the Dalai Lama's closest disciple monks and members of the bodyguard. These hundreds

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1. A.D. 629 - 649, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
   A.D. 627 - 649, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

of monks keep busy with their religious practices day and night. A large hall is reserved for general ceremonies and worship. White and scarlet walls and golden domes combine to present an enchanting spectacle. The main dome and other pinnacles are of pure gold and the entire city of Lhasa is visible from the top of the palace.

Many are the legends connected with this palace such as the one which says that it was originally constructed by heavenly spirits. Another one says that it took hundreds of years to build. However, the historians believe that its construction started during the reign of King Songtsen Gampo and that it was completed by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Undoubtedly, this palace is the best architectural masterpiece of Asian art.

■ Shoe (shod)

Located right below the Potala, it contains the highest court of Lhasa, 'Shriyan.' The central jail is just adjacent to it.

■ Norbulingka

Situated at a distance of 15 kilometres to the west of Lhasa, this magnificent palace is the summer residence of the Dalai Lama. 'Norbu, in Tibetan, is a stone more precious than a gem and 'Lingka' means a garden. The name Norbulingka therefore is suggestive of a palace decorated with precious stones and beautiful gardens. In fact, the garden and orchards around the palace are beautifully located and there is an abundance of flowers and fruits. Lovely canals and aqueducts with limpid flowing water add to the beauty of the scene. The rooms of the palace have been embellished with precious gems and gold artifacts. A set of magnificent rooms constitutes the Dalai Lama's exclusive quarters. This particular portion is called 'Lhe tsen fu-tian,' and to the Tibetans this place is a corner of heaven itself. Costly rugs, precious stones and golden images decorate these rooms. The Dalai Lama has his throne here, and it is made of pure gold. He mostly spends his time in religious practice in this palace which is strictly guarded by his private police.

■ Important places of worship and monasteries

Tibet is a land of lamas and is full of places of worship; prayers are being perpetually offered in houses of worship. Therefore, the atmosphere in Tibet is redolent with religious fervour day and night. Prayer flags of different colours can be seen fluttering over house-tops and on tree-tops, especially on trees on the banks of the Brahmaputra. These prayer flags, called 'Tha-jo,' are, according to Tibetan religious belief, put up to ward off and to protect against ghosts and evil and harmful spirits. As people go about their business, they continue to murmur the potent Buddhist mantra 'Om mani padme hum' to the accompaniment of long rosaries in their hands.

■ Chhokan, Bhakhowa (Jokhang, Bakor)

Jokhang is the biggest temple in Lhasa, and its biggest market 'Bhago' (Bakor) is located around this temple. Crowds of people gather every evening, circumambulate around Bakor and prostrate themselves in obeisance on the near carpet-like stone floor outside the temple. There are numerous images of Gautama Buddha, some of the images being seven to eight feet in height. There are many images of different deities in this temple like 'San-che-chumin Thin' (Sangay Chomden Dey) which, some people believe, was brought from Arabia during the period before the advent of the prophet when image worship was in vogue there. The image of goddess Pal-Lhamo is also made of gold and studded with gems. Precious ornaments adorn the necks and hands of these images, and these are generally made of turquoise, pearls, gold and costly stones, and even the inside of these images are filled with priceless gems. In front of the images are placed beautifully carved cup-shaped candlestands of gold. Each of these weighs not less than two kilos. Pure butter lamps are daily lighted in these cups in accordance with the Buddhist custom with the object of earning merit. Young and old lamas from all the monasteries of Tibet gather in this temple during the holy Molam (Monlam) festival for worship.

■ Chhokan, Ramoche (Jokhang, Ramoche)

Situated to the north of Lhasa and apart from the populated city, Ramoche is the second most important temple of Tibet. This too harbours numerous images of gods and goddesses. Besides this, Lhasa

has several enclosed buildings which the Tibetans call 'Zih-gan' (Zimkhang). On the porches built on four sides of these buildings are inscribed holy words, and on small earthen pedestals inside the buildings are placed images of deities or are written sacred letters, and the whole house is filled with them. At places a special, incense burner or the 'sangre' can be seen in which a highly aromatic grass is burnt. This grass, available on high hills, is used only for this purpose.

■ Important buildings and gardens

Lhasa's palatial buildings belong to its nobility. Situated in different parts of the city, they are variously named, and they are superior in design and decor to other buildings. Built in hewn stone and mortar, these palaces of the nobility are called 'sim-sha' (Zimshag). Some of the more famous ones are:

Zimshag Surkhang
Zimshag Labrang Nyingpa
Zimshag Zholkhang
Zimshag Ngapoe
Zimshag Kabshoe
Zimshag Samdrub Phodrang
Zimzhag Doring
Zimshag Dampa Zingag
Zimshag Poshoe Phunkhang
Zimshag Ragashag
Zimshag Lhaydhing
Zimshag Shatra
Zimshag Kunsang Tse
Zimshag Tsag Serkhang
Zimshag Tsharong
Zimshag Dode
Zimshag Horkhang
Zimshag Shoekhang
Zimshag Phala
Zimshag Trimon
Zimshag Taring
Zimshag Zomphue

Zimshag Yabshe
Zimshag Lhalu
Zimshag Yuthog
Zimshag Khyungram

Lhasa's famous gardens also belong to its nobles and are named after them. During spring and summer, people throng these gardens for picnics, and many big fairs are also held there. Some of the well-known gardens are: Zholkhang lingka, Nyishue lingka, Karmashag lingka, Shedelingka, Muro lingka, Tengyayling chabz lingka, Tsedrung lingka, Phalai lingka, Chagzoe lingka.

■ Shigazi (Shigatse)

The largest city after Lhasa, Shigatse, is situated to the west of the capital. It used to be a week's horse ride from Lhasa but later travel by bus has reduced it to a day's journey. This city also is a trade centre.

The Panchen Lama's beautiful palace is located here. It too has well-laid out gardens. It was built by Gedun Drub, the first Dalai Lama. Shigatse also has many places of worship and monasteries where lamas continue their prayers and rituals day and night.

Other important cities include Zhitron, Gyantse, Kham and Ngari etc.

Tibetan Lamas

The brand of Buddhism practised in Tibet is called 'Lamaism.' Padmasambhava, the great tantric teacher from India whom the Tibetans call 'Lopon Rinpoche,' fused the nature worship and other rituals of Bon religion with Buddhist practices in order to make Buddhism palatable to the people of Tibet. He thus became the founder of the present day lamaism which is a branch of Mahayana Buddhism. Bon, the ancient religion of Tibet, believed in a kind of nature worship and continued long to flourish. It was patronised by Trisong Detsen who was succeeded by Muni Tsenpo. This latter king tried to standardise and establish the rules and practices of Buddhism. It also got a very powerful supporter in the person of King Ralpachen. His successor, Lang Darma, tried to do everything to destroy Buddhism but failed as he himself was brought to death by a lama.

Notable among the Indian Buddhist monks who travelled to Tibet was Atisha of Bengal who was also known as Dipankar Srijnana. With the help of his disciple, Dromton, he was able to introduce a reformed version (of Buddhism) which came to be called 'Kadampa.' After three centuries it was transformed into 'Ge-lugpa' which is now the dominant sect in Tibet and its recognised church. As the Gelugpa or 'The right conduct' school progressed, the old Sakyapa school lost its importance.

During the early fifteenth century, another reformer, Tsong Khapa, reorganised Atisha's Kadampa sect. Tsong Khapa was born in A.D. 1358. He introduced celibacy and prohibition among monks and stringent discipline for the administration of monasteries.

Tsong Khapa founded great lamaseries at Sera, Gaden and Drepung. These are considered to be the most powerful religious centres of Tibet.

His followers called themselves the Yellow Hats in order to distinguish themselves from the existing Red Hats. Tsong Khapa's nephew Gedun Drup who built the Tashi Lhamo (Tashi Lhunpo) palace in Shigatse, became one of his most important disciple. This monastery style palace became the seat of Tashi Lama or the Panchen Lama. By and by, lamaism established such complete hold over Tibet that lama hegemony, as in its present shape and strength, came to stay, and Lhasa came under the rule of lamas.

The highest lama of the Sakya monastery in Western Tibet became the first lama ruler of Tibet. Kublai Khan, the Mongol emperor of China towards the end of the thirteenth century, invited the chief of Sakyapa to his court and the latter succeeded in winning over Kublai Khan to Buddhism. As recompense, the Mongol made him the ruler of Tibet. Thus commenced the lama rule in Tibet. As a result, lamaism also entered Mongolia with its monasteries and monks, and a great lama was installed in Urga, the capital of Mongolia. Religious, cultural and emotional relations between Tibet and Mongolia became very strong from then onwards. Later on the Mongol emperor, Altan Khan Taumedi and his cousin invited the then highest lama of Tibet, Gedun Drup to their court and conferred on him the title of 'Dalai Lama.' Since then, successive Dalai Lamas have ruled Tibet.

There are men monks and women monks. Women lamas are called 'Ani.' Religious custom does not allow monks to marry. Senior lamas wear yellow caps which are rather highly conical and very special in shape.

There are large numbers of monasteries in Tibet, and these are largely meant for these lamas, who continue their prayers day and night there. The monasteries own large properties in the shape of lands and gardens which yield an annual income worth thousands of rupees. Moreover, the Tibetan laity, in order to earn merit, offer a lot of gifts to these monasteries. Lhasa itself has numerous monasteries of which the most important are four.

■ Sera

Situated to the north of Lhasa, Sera is also known as the 'monastery with golden domes.' It has been beautifully raised on a hill. It houses many gold and silver images. 5,500 lamas reside in this monastery.

■ Drepung

The second well known monastery is Drepung which is located on a hill to the west of Lhasa. It has 7,700 monks.

■ Kaden (Gaden)

Situated to the east of Lhasa, this monastery has 3,300 resident lamas.

■ Morao

Redolent with continuous prayers, this monastery also houses thousands of lamas.

■ Molown (Monlam)

Every year, during the first month of the Tibetan New Year, the reins of the administration are handed over to the monks for a period of twenty days. All monks leave their monasteries and throng the city of Lhasa and billeting themselves in its monasteries, carry on continuous prayers and worship. During this period, they are given the right to give all decisions on judicial and other matters. This is done in order that their prayers and worship may bring prosperity to the country and the people in general may remain protected from diseases and calamities. Great festivities are held at the end of this twenty-day period and the administration is transferred back to the authorities with due ceremonies.

The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama

According to the system of religious government prevalent in Tibet, most of the powers rest with the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama who are considered to be Buddha manifestations. The word 'Dalai' in Tibetan means 'The Ocean of Wisdom' and 'Lama' means 'supreme' or 'one who has no equal.' The Dalai Lama has sovereign authority in spiritual and administrative spheres whereas the Panchen Lama is only a religious leader.

The Tibetans believe that, even when his physical form is no more, Lord Buddha's person is eternal and that he is always present in some human frame. The Dalai Lama's frame is that human one in which Buddha lives in manifest form. When a Dalai Lama dies, Lord Buddha manifests himself by transferring his essence to the body of the Dalai Lama to be.

Historians say that Kublai Khan, the Mongol ruler, whom the Tibetans call 'Sogpo Khangkar' invaded Tibet in A.D. 1248 and occupied eastern Tibet. Gradually, the Mongol kings became interested in the religion of the lamas. Later on, Altan Khan Taumedi and his cousin invited Gedun Drup, the highest lama of the day, to their court and conferred on him the title of 'Dalai Lama.' According to the Tibetan belief, when Gedun Drup died, his spirit entered the body of a newborn babe, Gedun Gyatso, who came to be designated as the second Dalai Lama. The third Dalai Lama, after the death of the second, was also selected in accordance with this tradition, and his name was Sonam Gyatso (A.D. 1543 – 1588) who was responsible for the propagation of Buddhism in Mongolia and many entered the new faith. The then Mongol government also conferred on him the title of Dalai Lama.

Thus, in subsequent times, the highest Lama came to be called 'The Dalai-Lama.' Yongten Gyatso, the fourth Dalai Lama (A.D. 1589-1617) died at a young age.

Nawang Lobsang Gyatso (A.D. 1617-1682) became the fifth Dalai Lama. He was a very impressive person. His people regarded him as priest, king and god rolled into one. It was during his reign that the monks came to assume great religious and political powers. Not only did this Dalai Lama give the Yellow Hats precedence over Red Hats but also, with the help of Gushri Khan, the Mongol prince, routed the armies of Raja Tsang (ruler of Tsang) and thus put an end to the power of Red Hat monks and brought the whole of Tibet under his sway. The Red Hat monks fled from Tibet and sought refuge in Bhutan. Thus Darma Lama became the first spiritual head of the Red Hat sect in Bhutan.

As the fifth Dalai Lama was a person of high status and renown, he was invited by the Chinese emperor who presented him with a gold medal with the inscription: 'Universal Ruler of the Buddhist Faith, Possessor of the Royal Sceptre, Supremely Eminent, Manifestation of Gautam Buddha, Dalai Lama.'

Some historical accounts state that this Dalai Lama was also the builder of Potala. He had delegated his political powers to his Prime Minister. He died around A.D. 1682.

Tsang Yang Gyatso (A.D. 1683-1706) was recognised as the sixth Dalai Lama after the death of the Great Fifth. It is mentioned in historical accounts that he greatly loved worldly pleasures and comforts of life. While proceeding to Peking on an invitation from a Mongol prince, he died on the way. His sudden death put Tibet into a state of uncertainty and turmoil. Taking advantage of the situation, the Tartars invaded Tibet and ravaged many parts of it. The Tibetans requested the Chinese emperor Kang Hsi for help who greatly aided the Tibetans in ousting the Tartar invaders.

By the time the seventh Dalai Lama, Kesang Gyatso (A.D. 1708-1757) started his reign, the Chinese influence in Tibet had become sufficiently pronounced. Hence the seventh Dalai Lama ruled under their supervision. As the British rule in India had been established by then, the Chinese, out of considerations for security and safety banned the entry of Europeans into Tibet.

After the death of Kesang Gyatso, the eight Dalai-Lama in the person of Jampal Gyatso (A.D. 1758-1805), came to be recognised. He did not relish Chinese interference in the affairs of his country and tried to retrieve the administration from such interference. The Chinese put him in prison, and this act of theirs so much incensed the Tibetans that they killed the Chinese representative. The Chinese ruler, Chien Lung, invaded Tibet and put political pressure on in order to enhance Chinese influence on the Tibetan government. After this, acting on the stratagem of secretly poisoning to death the successive Dalai Lamas, the Chinese poisoned the ninth Dalai-Lama, Luntok Gyatso, at a very young age and the tenth, eleventh and twelfth Dalai Lamas later.

The thirteenth Dalai Lama, Thupten Gyatso, was born in A.D. 1876. After his installation as the Dalai Lama, he succeeded in establishing his absolute political sway over Tibet inspite of Chinese hindrances. In the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, China was defeated, and the Dalai Lama brought the whole of Tibet under his influence and administration. Differences cropped up between the British rulers of India and Tibet in 1904 as the Britishers feared that Russia might interfere in Tibet. So they despatched an armed delegation under Sir Francis Younghusband to Tibet. The Tibetans refused to negotiate with it, and the delegation was not allowed to enter Tibet. The Britishers advanced towards Lhasa with an Expeditionary Force, and the Dalai Lama took refuge in Mongolia. Seeing the increasing British influence in Tibet, the Chinese felt jittery, and they again invaded Tibet in 1910. The Dalai Lama and his cabinet fled to India and stayed in Darjeeling till 1912.

The Dalai Lama, in view of the prevailing circumstances, appealed to the king of Nepal for help but the latter regretted his inability. He then appealed to the British government as also to the Czar of Russia for similar help but to no avail. In the meantime, as a result of the mutual bickerings of the Chinese rulers, civil war broke out in China. When the Revolution came, all the countries which had been forcibly occupied by China, declared their independence.

The Dalai Lama returned from India in June 1912 and declared the complete independence of Tibet and put it on the road of a sovereign independent state. During his rule, Tibet minted its own currency, imposed custom duty, organised its army and introduced its own post and telegraph system and other civil services.

China, India and Tibet met in a conference at Simla in 1913, and a Convention of the three countries was also held in 1914, but China went back on the Agreement just after two days and the dispute between China and Tibet stayed. However, the Dalai Lama made a plain declaration to say that Tibet had no links with China. This great Dalai Lama passed away in November 1933.

The present Dalai Lama was selected after the death of the thirteenth. His full name is Lobsang Yeshe Tenzing, and he was born on the 6th of July 1935. Installed as the Dalai Lama in February 1940, his person has been held in high esteem and reverence ever since his childhood.

When the Chinese armies first entered Tibet in 1950, he left Lhasa for Yatung in southern Tibet. The Chinese propped up the Panchen Lama in his place in Lhasa till his return on August 23, 1957. He had to perforce sign the seventeen Point Agreement with the Chinese. The period from 1957 to 1959 continued to be a time of great tension between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese.

In March 1959 the Tibetans revolted against the cruel and savage rule of the occupationist Chinese in Tibet. However, when the Dalai Lama felt that all Tibetans would be killed unless the hostilities eased and that the only way to stop them was for himself to either quit or be killed, he decided to bid farewell to his beloved land at midnight on March 17, 1959; leaving by a secret passage of the Potala Palace, he headed for India. He stepped into India on April 2, 1959.

The present Dalai Lama is well-known, not only among Tibetans but all over the world for his moral stature, upright conduct and gentle manly qualities. Buddhists all over the world hold him in the highest esteem, and all pay reverence to him. In India at present, he looks after his people with the same concern as in Tibet. Dharamsala, where he stays, is also the headquarters of his government in exile, which is endevouring to regain for Tibet its lost independence.

■ Administrative system

Although under the theocratic government of Tibet, the Dalai Lama possesses supreme authority, the Council of Ministers-Kashag, and the National Assembly-Tsongdu, advise the Dalai Lama on day to day

matters. The Council of Ministers consists of six members, two of them are monks and four are from among the nobles. They are appointed by the Dalai Lama. Undoubtedly the Kashag is the highest administrative organ.

The People's Assembly has between five to six hundred members who include the representatives of monasteries, national organisations, nobles, industrial workers and the common people. The session of the National Assembly is convened to consider important issues placed before it on behalf of the Dalai Lama or the Kashag.

The Dalai Lamas and their reign

1.	Gedun Drup	A.D. 1391-1475
2.	Gedun Gyatso	A.D. 1475-1543
3.	Sonam Gyatso	A.D. 1543-1588
4.	Yonten Gyatso	A.D. 1589-1617
5.	Nawang Lobsang Gyatso	A.D. 1617-1682
6.	Tsangyang Gyatso	A.D. 1683-1706
7.	Kesang Gyatso	A.D. 1708-1757
8.	Jampal Gyatso	A.D. 1758-1805
9.	Luntok Gyatso	A.D. 1806-1815
10.	Tsultrim Gyatso	A.D. 1816-1837
11.	Khedrub Gyatso	A.D. 1838-1856
12.	Trinle Gyatso	A.D. 1856-1875
13.	Thupten Gyatso	A.D. 1876-1937
14.	Tenzin Gyatso	A.D. 1940-

The spread of learning and art in Tibet

The coming into being of learning and arts in Tibet is first noticeable during the reign of King Namri Songtsen Gampo (A.D. 629)[2]. Up until then Tibetan had been merely a spoken language in Tibet. It had no recognised or standard script for writing the language. The science of medicine and arithmetic came from China during this period, and oral teaching in these subjects started in Lhasa. When Songtsen Gampo, the son of king Namri, ascended the throne, he sent a few students to India to receive the highest education so that on their return to Tibet they should be able to devise an easy and acceptable script for the

2. A.D. 600, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

Tibetans. One of these students was Sambhota, an extraordinarily intelligent lad. These students attained great proficiency in Indian lore and learned Sanskrit at the feet of such scholars as Pandit Dramze Lhejin and Pandit Lharigpai-Senge. They studied well-known Sanskrit texts like Pali's grammar, Chandrapa and Kalapo. On return, they devised a script for the Tibetan language based on the Sanskrit script.

Tibetan records mention that two scripts were in vogue in India at that time - 'Lantsa' and 'Watu' as the Tibetans called them. Basing it on the former, Sambhota devised the Uchen script, and all books of knowledge have been written in this script up untill today. Based on the 'Watu,' he devised the U-med letters, and this script has been used for writing business and trade books.

King Songtsen Gampo was himself a very learned person and patronised men of learning. He took an active part in literary and cultural activities. He was highly pleased with the work of Lonpo Alon's son and conferred on him the prestigious title of 'Sambhota,' and ever afterwards, he came to be known by this name.

The reign of this king witnessed great progress in arts and letters. He also invited many foreign scholars to Lhasa like Kumara Devi (Dev) and Manjushri Timsey Lichin from China. Sambhota, with the assistance of these scholars, translated about 21 books of religion and other arts from Sanskrit and Chinese into Tibetan. He himself was the author of about eight books. He also compiled the Tibetan legal compendium. The teachings of Buddhism and the light of knowledge spread all over the country during the reign of king Songtsen Gampo.

The famous Indian Pandit, Sage Padmasambhava, whom the Tibetans call 'Loppon Rinpoche' came to Tibet during the reign of King Trisong Detsen (A.D. 740-786)[3]. Besides preaching Buddhism, he translated several Sanskrit works into Tibetan and thus added to the store-house of Tibetan literature. His translations included those of such works as Meghaduta, Amarkosha and verses of the Gita. Later kings and learned lamas also wrote books on various topics at various times.

A scholarly muslim, Fazl-Ullah by name, translated the Persian classics of Gulistan and Bostan into idiomatic Tibetan verse, adding his own thoughts here and there. 'Khache Phalu,' as the book is called, became a very popular work, and its idioms are still wildly current in

3. A.D. 755 - 797, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa,
A.D. 754 - 797, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

the Tibetan language. A study of Tibetan literature shows that ninety percent of it comprises books which were translated from ancient Indian texts in Sanskrit.

Works which are of the highest importance and held to be of divine origin are the following:

1. Kanchoo (Kagyur).
2. Tinjur (Tangyur).
3. Bum, which is a commentary on Kangyur and Tangyur.

For Tibetans these are the holiest of their religious books. They emphasise the impermanence and perishability of the world and, therefore, teach detachment and renunciation from life and the cultivation of noble conduct, truthfulness, compassion, etc.

■ The Spread of Buddhism in Tibet

The word 'Buddha' generally refers to Sidhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. In fact, 'Buddha' is the title of various fore-runners of Buddhism, meaning 'the wise,' 'the enlightened.' There have been several Buddhas, Gautama being one of them.

Sidhartha Gautama was the son of an Aryan Kshatriya king of the Sakyas, bordering Nepal. He was born in 563 B.C. and died in 488 B.C. There is a difference of opinion about these dates; however the fact remains that he lived for over eighty years.

The religion of Buddha is the religion of the people of Tibet, and they are followers of Buddha. The Tibetans believe that Buddhism first came to Tibet during the reign of Gyapo Lha Thore Nyen-tsen (A.D. 254-373)[4]. This king lived until the age of 140 years. According to the Tibetan legend, the following books descended from the skies during his reign:

1. Pakang Chag Gyapa.
2. Do De Zamatok.
3. Damchoe Doba Domen.

It was, however, during the reign of King Songtsen Gampo (A.D. 620-680)[5] that the teachings of Buddhism fully spread in Tibet. Both his queens, one of whom, Balsa-khri-btsun, the daughter of King Jyotiverma of Nepal and the other, Gya-za-kongjo, the daughter of the Chinese ruler, endorsed Buddhism. They brought with them a number of books and images, and these proved very helpful in the spread of Buddhism. Many Buddhist saints from other countries who also helped

4. "Tho-Tho-ri Nyantsen was born in A.D. 173," *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
5. A.D. 629 - 649, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
   A.D. 627 - 649, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

in the spread of Buddhism visited Tibet during this period. Beside Buddhist religion, arts and letters also progressed rapidly during Gampo's reign. The king successfully led many expeditions and expanded his dominions up to Ladakh and southern Nepal. As his aforesaid queens did not have a child, he married a third princess who gave birth to a son, Kongri Kontson. This prince ascended the throne at the age of thirteen, and he continued the propagation of the Buddhist Faith. He defeated the Tartars in Kokonor region and invaded China and defeated the Chinese in battle. Later, the Chinese launched a strong counter-offensive, reached the gates of Lhasa and set on fire Lam Bu Lhagan, the royal palace.

During the reign of Trisong Detsen (A.D. 740-786)[6] three great Indian Buddhists were invited to visit Tibet. These were Padmasambhava, Khenpo Shewa and Sange Jowo. In addition to religious preaching, they rendered many Sanskrit texts into Tibetan. This king was followed by many others who equally put their share into the progress of Buddhism. In A.D. 820[7], Muni Tsenpo ascended the throne, but he died after only a year's rule. He was followed by Mute Tsenpo who too was soon murdered by his brother. He had five sons: Sangma or Sangme, Lha-re, Lundup, Tarma (Darma) and Iliya-chen(Ralpachen). Of the five, Lundup died at an early age; Sangme became a monk; Lha-re died at 15, and Tarma (Darma) being a child, Iliya-chen was the only one left in the field and succeeded the throne of his father in 901[8]. He followed the footsteps of his forefathers; he had revised the Tibetan translations of Indian Sanskrit texts. For this purpose, he invited from India such great contemporary scholars as Khenpo Zena-mitra, Soranta-mitra and Jnana sheela.

Relations with China deteriorated during his rule, and war broke out between the two countries. He overran parts of China and annexed them to Lhasa. Later, a Peace Treaty was signed. Monks were accorded a place of pride in the government, and they came to be highly revered. This incensed government officials, and they thought of a stratagem. They prevailed upon some astrologers to give the verdict that unless the king banished Sangme, the chief Lama, a great calamity would

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6. A.D. 755 - 797, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
   A.D. 754 - 797, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson
7. A.D. 797, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
   A.D. 797, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson
8. A.D. 815, *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa
   A.D. 815 *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

soon overtake the country. The plea succeeded; Lama Sangme was exiled to India. Now they looked for a chance to execute their plans, and so, one day, they succeeded in murdering the king. They put his brother, Lang Tarma (Darma), on the throne. He was a staunch detractor of Buddhism, and as accident would have it, many people and animals in Lhasa and elsewhere in Tibet died of an epidemic at the time. Was it not the work of those evil spirits which had entered Tibet along with those images brought from China? These were ordered to be smashed or thrown into the river. The heavier ones, which could not be lifted, were burried in deep pits. All the books were burnt, and the Indian Pandits and translators were expelled from Tibet.

Lama Lha-Lung Palkye Dorji was busy with his worship outside the city of Lhasa. Hearing of these developments, he got a dress stitched which was black on the outside but white inside with exceptionally long sleeves. One day, he hid his bow and arrow in his gown, blackened his white horse and rode towards the king's palace. The king was busy reading something and Lama Dorji, in accordance with ceremony, bowed low before the king to pay his respect and all at once took out his bow and arrow and shot the king in the chest. The king fell dead instantaneously. The monk changed his dress for the reverse side of his gown and rode away hastily from the scene. He jumped into river Lhasa with his horse, and the water washed away the artificial black and his horse was again white. His pursuers failed to identify him owing to the changed colour of the horse and its mount.

Lang Tarma (Darma) was succeeded by Udai Shang who invited the Indian religious leader, Atisha, to Tibet. He rejuvenated Buddhism in the country and himself rose very high in the esteem of the Tibetan people. Five years later Kublai Khan, whom the Tibetans call 'Sogpo Khankar,' invaded Tibet in A.D. 1248 and conquered its eastern provinces. He became interested in Buddhism, and he appointed the Sakya Lama as the ruler of Central Tibet.

After his death, Altan Khan Taumedi and his cousin invited Lama Gedun Drup to the court and conferred on him the title of 'Dalai Lama'. Later Mongol rulers also conferred the title on Lama Sonam Gyatso who became the Third Dalai Lama. Ever since the Fifth Dalai Lama, Lobsang Gyatso, became the ruler of the whole of Tibet, successive Dalai Lamas have ruled Tibet in accordance with the tenets of Buddhism, and every Dalai Lama's reign has witnessed the progress of Buddhism.

■ Religious beliefs

As already mentioned, the Tibetans believe that although his physical body has perished, the Buddha is eternal and that he is always manifest in some human frame. The Dalai Lama is the person in whom the person of Buddha manifests himself. The lamas also believe that the spirit is immortal, and that sin and merit do exist. Prayer is essential and even a moment's lapse from it is a great sin. The Tibetans, therefore, have in vogue strange devices for perpetual prayer and worship.

The Tibetans make a special type of wheel which is inscribed with prayers, and the wheel always rotates on its axle. Some prepare wheels on the principle of rotation by water and wind energy. Great merit accrues from it. Some continue rotating with their hands a special kind of prayer wheel called 'Mani' while reciting the Tibetan formula 'Om mani padme hum.' So also on housetops, on tree-tops and near river banks can be seen waving multi-coloured cloth flags on which are written different prayers and these are meant to ward off sufferings, worries, calamities and evil and harmful spirits. These flags are called Tharchok.

The people of Tibet believe in ghosts and spirits and worship them. There is nothing in the world which is not affected by the presence of these elements. Some priests specialise in the art of warding off these evil spirits. When such priests declare that ghosts and ghouls are roaring about in large numbers, people collect large sums of money to be presented to these priests so that they can propitiate and ward off these spirits by performing due rituals. The priests usually perform worship at night on the roofs of houses with red coloured lanterns in their hands. This satisfies the people, and they feel re-assured.

Lamas who can ward off evil spirits are a class by themselves. Just as the Hindus enact Ram Lila and the fight between Rama and Ravana, these priests also enact stories depicting fights with evil spirits. Wielding several feet long horned trumpets to the music of drums and cymbals, wearing the skins of tigers, bears and monkeys etc. assuming many frightful forms, carrying swords and lances in their hands, priests fight the ghosts, and the play ends with the rout of the evil spirits.

The lamas are called into the house when a person dies. They undress the dead body, tie its knees to the neck securely and place it in a separate room. The rich allow such dead bodies to remain in this position for

many days. So secured, the dead man cannot trouble other members of the household. During such solitary confinement of the dead, the priests continue non-stop worship by reading holy books and playing on drums, trumpets and shehnai. The near relations of the dead man provide the priests with daily food etc. by turns. In the meantime, an astrologer is called who fixes up a date for the funeral. On the appointed day, the dead body is removed from the room, usually at night, is taken to a hill-top away from the city, is cut into pieces and is scattered on the hill so as to be readily available to animals there. This method of disposal is considered to be the most privileged treatment for a dead body.

Part II

The Propagation of Islam in Tibet and Tibetan Muslims

■ The Propagation of Islam in Tibet and Tibetan Muslims

Muslims as well as other people of the world know very little about Tibetan Muslims. The reason is that the historians who have written the chronicle of Tibet have not mentioned anything about the real condition and the chronological history of Tibetan muslims in a manner that could throw light on their life in Tibet. The second reason is that Tibetan Muslims remained cut off for a long time from their Muslim brethren elsewhere and that they continued to be a forgotten race.

Most of the books on Tibet have been written by Christian missionaries. It is a matter of surprise that except for Arab historians nobody has made any mention of Tibetan Muslims or the propagation of Islam in Tibet.

It is very difficult to say with any amount of certainty as to the earliest years of preaching of Islam in Tibet and the earliest of Muslims who entered the country because history throws no light on it. However, the accounts of geographers and historians amply prove that when Tibet was as large or even larger than China in area and political power, the Arab traders used to visit China for commerce and trade and often came to Tibet also via Samarkand, Bukhara, Kashghar, Chinese Turkestan and Ladakh, and they had close trade relations with Tibet as well. A detailed reference has already been made to the accounts of Arab writers about the geographical boundaries of ancient Tibet. All this goes to prove that the relations between Arabs and Tibet were age-old and that the Muslim preachers who went to China, Chinese Turkestan, Kashghar, Bukhara, Baltistan and Ladakh, did reach Tibet also.

Most parts of Central Asia, especially Samarkand, Bukhara, Kashghar and Chinese Turkestan, have come under the influence of

Islam. There were very close trade relations between Tibet and these countries in those days. Muslim preachers from these areas continued to visit Tibet, and the people, in a limited way, continued to benefit from them. Referring to Tibetan Muslims, Prof. T.W. Arnold in his book 'The Preaching of Islam' says, "Islam came to Tibet from Iran and the Chinese province of Yunan." Trade relations between China and the Arab kingdom had begun during the first century after Christ, and they reached their peak during the third and fourth centuries.

As far as the spread of Islam in China is concerned, Badruddin Chini thus says in his book, 'Chini Musalman,' "Sea trade between Arabia and China had been in vogue even before the advent of Islam in Arabia. Of the Muslim preachers who, in the Tanak period, entered China during the reign of Tai Chung in 205 Hijri, one preacher took residence in the city of Canton, another in the city of Yang Chao, and two others in the city of Chwang Cho. An old mosque known as 'Wai shizi' still stands in Canton. Its minaret still resounds with the call of 'Azan' and the mosque and the minaret reflect Arabian architecture."

Tradition says that this mosque was founded by the first preacher, Saad bin Ali wa Qas who had made the city of Canton the centre of his teachings. It was from there that it spread to different areas of southern China. Badruddin also refers to the authority of the Chinese writer, Lui Tchu, the author of an 18th century biography of the prophet (Mohammed) entitled 'Chee-Chia-She-Huzo,' and says "Hazrat Saad returned to Arabia after staying for a long time in Canton. Later, he was officially despatched to the Chinese court by Hazrat Usman, the third Caliph. This time he did not return. In fact, he died in Canton and was buried there. A tomb in Canton is associated with his name."

Badruddin further refers to 'Hayat-e-Muhammedi,' of Lui Tehoe published in Peking in August 1924 to say that Muslims as preachers had reached China before A.D. 651 but presented themselves as official ambassadors at the court only in that year. The leader of this first Arab delegation was Saad bin Ali Wa-Qas because he had earlier stayed in Canton and was fully conversant with conditions in China. After presenting himself at the court, he returned to Canton and, with the permission of the emperor, built a mosque named 'Yadgar-e-nabi.'

Historically speaking, this story does not appear to be plausible because Saad bin Ali Wa-Qas died in 55 Hijri, and his body was brought to holy Medina and buried in the garden of Heaven.

Prof. T.W. Arnold says, 'The followers of Islam first reached the north western countries of the Chinese empire from Central Asia.' The reason was that friendly relations developed between the Chinese emperors and the Muslim Caliphs who had conquered the provinces adjacent to Arabia. The Chinese knew about Arabia during the second century after Christ, but diplomatic relations between the Caliphs and the Chinese emperors came to be established only after the death of the Iranian king Xerxer. Feroze Xexer, his successor, asked for military help from China against his enemies. The Chinese ruler excused himself on the ground that Iran was too far away from China for any troops to be dispatched and that, instead, he could recommend Feroze to Hazrat Usman. When the Chinese ambassador went to Usman's court to intercede on behalf of Feroze, he was warmly received and an Arab commander was sent along with him on his return journey. This Arab commander was received by the Chinese emperor in A.D. 651.

Qatiba-bin-Muslim was appointed the governor of Khurasan during the reign of Caliph Waleed-bin-Abdul Malik (A.D. 705-715). As a result of various battles fought by him, Bukhara, Samarkand and other territories came under Islamic rule, and Islam was propagated there. After these conquests, Qatiba-bin-Muslim pressed eastwards towards China with the head of his victorious armies. He sent messengers to the Chinese emperor who paid huge sums of money to them before dispatching them back to indicate that he had accepted the supremacy of the Caliphate. Many years later, a number of such ambassadors visited China with numerous gifts during the period of Caliph Hushian (A.D. 724-742).

In A.D. 757 Caliph Mansur sent an envoy to Emperor Sit-Ming. It was a period of great trade and commerce, and the visits of envoys to Chinese courts were established between China and the Caliphate in Baghdad; it facilitated the propagation of Islam through religiously zealot traders who came to China from such far-off places as Mawra-ul-nehr, Bukhara and Arabia.

After the decline of the Han dynasty in China in A.D. 617, the Tang dynasty came to power. Sho Ching, the tenth king of the dynasty, once requested military help from the Muslim ruler of Khorasan during an insurrection. The Amir dispatched a contingent of 10,000 soldiers to the Chinese capital, and they inflicted a crushing defeat on the rebels.

Highly pleased with this, Emperor Sho Ching granted these soldiers the permission to take residence in the capital and marry Chinese women. The progeny of many of those who settled there spread over northern China. Moreover, those who had embraced Islam in Chinese Turkestan during the period of Qatiba-bin Muslim also continued to migrate to China.

As for the spread of Islam in Chinese Turkestan, it was due to the 'Kitai' people, a branch of the 'Ghaz' tribals—also called 'Hon-loo' in those days—of Turkish origin in the beginning of the sixth century after Christ. This race established its hegemony in a part of China with the capital at Tarfan. Two of its famous rulers were Gol-Takson and Bakika Khan.

Qatiba-bin-Muslim, during the Caliphate of Walid-bin-Abdul Malik, captured Kashghar, and Islam spread there during this period. Bughra Khan, a leading chieftain of the Kitai clan, embraced Islam in the ninth century, and this helped strengthen the presence of Islam.

For some period afterwards this area remained under Tibetans, but it came to be occupied by the Mughals (Mongols) in the 12th century. This again gave a fillup to Islam in the region. As China was under the Mughals (Mongol), many a clan from Chinese Turkestan joined the ranks of Muslims. However, Chinese Turkestan came under the Chinese empire in the 14th century after the defeat of the Mongols at the hands of the Chinese.

All the aforesaid references amply demonstrate that the light of Islam had reached Chinese Turkestan and China during the first century of the Hijri era. As the Tibetans travelled a lot to neighbouring countries, it could be safely inferred that, by the end of the first or the beginning of the second century (Hijri), they also must have come in contact with Islam. Also, some history books refer to the attacks on Tibet by Islamic zealots and to the efforts of Muslim preachers to bring people to the fold of Islam. It may be pertinent here to refer to the accounts of some Arabic authors.

Abu Jafar Mohamed-bin-Jaridul-tabri, a famous Arab historian, writes, "During the reign of Caliph Umr-bin-Abdul Aziz (717-772), a delegation from Tibet came to the court of Al-Jarah-bin Abdullah Al-Hukmi, the ruler of Khorasan, with the request that an Islamic preacher

be sent to their country. So Salit-bin-Abdullah Al-Hanefi was dispatched, to Tibet and the people got acquainted with Islam."

Maulana Shah Muaemuddin Ahmed Nadri, in his 'History of Islam,' referring to this event says, "Hearing of Caliph Omar's great qualities and his dedication to Islam, some countries requested through their delegations for preachers. So Sallet-bin-Abdullah Hanafi was despatched with the Tibetan delegations to China."

Tabri has further mentioned in his book that the ruler of Tibet was one of those who accepted the supremacy of Khalifatul Maholi.

During the concluding years of Caliph Harron-Rasheed's reign (A.D. 786-809), the rebel chieftain Rafah-bin-Lais was aided by the Tibetans during the Samarkand Revolt. He further writes, "The king of Tibet embraced Islam during the reign of Al-manoon (A.D. 813-833) and in token thereof he sent a golden image, which he used to worship, to Khorasan. This image was placed on a gem-encrusted golden stool. Memoon despatched it to Mecca and told about God's advice to the Tibetan king. During a rebellion, Yazid-bin-Mohamedul Makhroomi minted gold coins out of this image."

Besides this, the Arabs had very strong trade contacts with Tibet, and articles which were imported from Tibet especially included Tibetan ornament and Tibetan musk. The Arabs considered the musk from Tibet far superior to that from China for two reasons. Let us have the testimony of Yaqut Hamvi who states, "Tibetan musk was superior because, firstly, the Tibetan doe ate silk tree and fragrant herbs and, secondly, whereas the Chinese remove the musk from the pouch, the Tibetans allow it to stay in it." Yet another reason was that the Chinese musk arrived by the sea-route and became damp enroute, thus affecting its quality; the Tibetan musk, however, arrived by land through Persia and Oman and, although encased in its pouch, it was always fresh.

The period of Arab conquest of Central Asia coincided with the age of the supremacy of Tibetan power when it waged victorious wars against China. Chinese accounts usually speak of Tibet and Arabia as each other's close allies. Says Chavannes, "The Arabs helped the Tibetans in Kashgaria just as the Tibetans had helped Arabs in the Sihoon valley."

It appears that the Arab geographers while referring to Tibet, also include the area of Baltistan or Little Tibet.

When Islam had successfully established itself in northern India and Central Asia by the 9th century of the Hijri era(15th century A.D.), the Muslim rulers attacked Tibet, especially Little Tibet, Baltistan, in the name of 'jehad.'

By the end of the ninth century (Hijri), areas of Bolor and Tibet which lie between Badakhshan and Kashmir, were conquered by Mairooni, a commander of Abu Bakr Dughlat, the ruler of Kashghar. In A.D. 1514, Sayeed Khan ousted Abu Bakr, and his troops vacated the fortresses they had built in Greater Tibet, Ladakh. The Tibetans reoccupied these fortresses along with royal treasuries. During the reign of Sayeed Khan (A.D. 1514-1533), Mir Mazeed attacked Ladakh, Tibet and its adjoining areas. In A.D. 1533, Haider Mirza tried to storm Lhasa which he calls 'Ursung, the city of big temples.' He had to retreat from Aska-bog, a place a week's journey short of Lhasa. Later on, as ruler of Kashmir, Haidar Mirza attacked Ladakh and Baltistan in A.D. 1548. This proves that Baltistan was a part of Tibet in the 10th century (Hijri). According to 'Tarikhe Rasheedi' (p. 436), "This region was situated between Bolor and Tibet, and Islam had not come here till then."

By the end of the 16th century A.D. Islam had become a political power in Little Tibet. Ali Mir Sher Khan, the ruler of Khapulu, had conquered the whole of Baltistan and rid it of Buddhism and image-worship. He also conquered Ladakh and founded the city of Skardu which is now the capital of Baltistan. Probably, the most well-organised invasion of Tibet was that of Mohamed-Bakhtiar Khilji, the Sultan of Bengal, in A.D. 1243.

■ The invasion of Bakhtiar Khilji

Bakhtiar Khilji was a valiant commander of Sultan Qutubuddin Aibak, the first Muslim ruler of India. After conquering Bihar, he reduced Bengal and thought of conquering Tibet. He advanced from Lakhnanti, the capital of Bengal, at the head of 10,000 troops. Between Lakhnanti and Tibet were the settlements of three tribes, Koch, Mech and Tharu. They were racially Turkish in origin and spoke different dialects which were a mixture of the languages of Tibet and India.

Ali Mech was one of the chiefs of Koch and Mech who was converted to Islam by Bakhtiar Khilji. He acted as Khilji's guide towards the mountains of Tibet up to Marwahan Kot which had been founded by Garshasp Shah. The city was on the banks of river Kang-mati which was three times larger than the Ganges in length, breadth and depth. After a ten-day journey, Bakhtiar Khilji reached a bridge which had more than a score of arches. Going across he was accosted with a message from the king of Kamrup that he should desist from attacking Tibet for he himself would do the same next year with a large army. However, Bakhtiar Khilji ignored the suggestion and continued to advance further. In A.D. 1243 he halted at the residence of Motimidaula situated between Devkot and Bengal. Motimidaula had been his subordinate at Lakhnanti. Bakhtiar was informed that after crossing the bridge it would be a journey of fifteen days through mountains and valleys before he would come across a happy Tibetan settlement on the sixteenth day. Bakhtiar's army reached a fortified town, and its troops and the people of the neighbourhood gave him a tough battle which lasted from morning till noon. Many Muslim soldiers were killed. The enemy soldiers wielded long bows; their personal armour and shields were all of a special type of silk but were very stoutly stitched. Those who were taken into custody at night revealed that five furlongs ahead was a city called 'Karm-ten' with a contingent of three and a half lacs of brave Turkish bowmen. Karm-ten was a big city with strong fortifications. Its population was Buddhist. About 1500 horses from Lakhnanti were daily traded in its cattle mart.

Forty-five mountain ridges stood between Kamrup and Tibet. When Bakhtiar came to know about the arduous track ahead, he held consultations with his commanders. All of them advised that in view of the increasing severity of the winter it would be proper to bear a retreat so that they could return the next year with full preparations for a full-scale invasion.

On his return journey, Bakhtiar found that the enemy had destroyed and burnt everything. They could get nothing to eat, nor was any fodder available for horses. There was a heavy snowfall all the day too. Thus for fifteen days his troops marched back on hungry stomachs and faced great obstacles. Men and horses perished in large numbers. The bridge on the river had been burnt down; boats were unavailable. Therefore in

order to cross it, they jumped into the current at a comparatively fordable point, but almost all were washed away by the current. Very few along with Bakhtiar Khilji reached the other bank. Arriving at Devkot, he fell terribly ill and died of the shock of his mission's failure.

The above accounts, historical facts and the sayings of elders are a witness to the fact that the aforesaid events refer to Tsang or northern Tibet where winter is very severe. It is further corroborated by certain items of dress which the Tibetan soldiers wear on the occasion of a particular festival.

When the twenty-day rule of the monks end in Lhasa and the reins of administration are again handed over to the Tibetan government, a grand festival called 'Yasor' is held in which the Tibetan soldiers on horse-back appear in their best shields and armour and steel helmets. As a child, I myself have seen on such occasions the helmet with the hymn of the divine throne and other prayers inscribed on it in golden letters. We children would plead with the soldiers to allow us to kiss it. During these celebrations, a large flag, along with other flags, was also brought wrapped in silk clothes on which were also written hymns (ayat) in gold. Elderly Tibetans used to point out that all those articles were once discovered from under the snow in the northern Tibetan region of Dam. Whoever was appointed to carry this flag would have to abjure meat and drink for a month prior to the festival. A week before he must cleanse and purify himself with a nice bath. Whoever tried to carry this flag by flouting these restrictions would get a bleeding nose and ultimately die. Thus, besides adhering to purity and cleanliness, the Tibetan soldiers paid great respect to this flag.

■ Hazrat Sayyad Ali Hamdani

The spread of Islam in Kashmir is attributed to Hazrat Sayyad Ali Hamdani. He came to Kashmir in 773 or 780 Hijri (A.D. 1374 or 1381), and his teachings converted most of the population to Islam. This lineage of Hamdani flourished in Kashmir up to the eleventh century of the Hijri era. A great personage in this lineage was Shaikh Maulana Yaqub Sarfi Kashmiri (d. 1030 Hijri) who was a pupil of Allama Ibn Hajr Haimu Maki, one of the greatest scholars of Hadis and its commentaries of his time and a teacher of Imam Rabbani Hazrat

Mujadad Alaf Sani. His lineage has continued in Kashmir till today, and it is still alive.

Hazrat Sayyad Ali Hamdani visited Kashmir thrice: first during the time of Sultan Shahabuddin (A.D. 1360-1375), then in A.D. 1379 during the time of Sultan Qutub-uddin in the company of seven hundred 'sadats' who undertook proselytisation in and around Kashmir. Sultan Qutub-udin also continued to benefit from his society, and as a matter of grace he gave his head-gear ('Kulah') to the Sultan who always used to keep it beneath his crown. In A.D. 1517, Sultan Fateh Shah carried their headgear into his grave, which occasioned this portentous comment from an elder "The royal crown is removed from the head of the ruler of Kashmir and his kingdom had a fall." And so it happened that from that day onwards commenced the kingdom's downfall.

In A.D. 1382 Hazrat Sayyad Ali Hamdani came to Kashmir for the third time. Once again he was accompanied by a large team of Islamic preachers. He soon, however, left on a holy pilgrimage. Although there is no mention of any visit to Tibet by him during his three trips, legends are current about him in Baltistan, which the Arab historians always termed as Little Tibet: that he came to Kashmir with his companions and, propagating Islam, reached Skardu, where the preachings gradually moulded the people towards Islam and a vast majority of them embraced it; that he built a mosque over Khari dzong, the first of its kind; and that from there he proceeded to Ambok and built the first mosque of Kashgkar region there. It is said that his sceptre still lies hidden in the dome of that mosque.

As trade caravans from Ladakh and Kashmir used to visit Tibet, it could be concluded that those Islam preachers who came to Kashmir with Sayyad Ali Hamdani and who propagated Islam in Ladakh and Baltistan, some of them must also have entered Tibet through these routes. In the Lhasa grave-yard there are high-rise graves and such other ancient monuments which the Tibetan Muslims regard as the graves of their ancient sages who introduced Islam there. It has been heard from elders that many godmen came to Tibet among whom the names of Peer Puraula and Maulama Basheer Ahmed are well-known.

■ Peer Puruala

Very few people knew his real name. As he was pitch black in complexion, he came to be known as 'The Black Peer.' 'Porog' in Tibetan is the word for a 'crow.' History is silent as to wherefrom he came to Lhasa.

Anecdotes about him have been passed on from generation to generation as related by elders. It is said that he never uttered a word but always remained immersed in god remembrance. He never visited the city of Lhasa and lived on a rock away from the town. This rock is known as 'dargah.' It has some ancient remnants which include a platform for 'namaz' (prayer), carved out of the rock, with niches for placing utensils etc. Muslims often went on pilgrimage to this spot where, on the stone slab, they would bow and bend and say their prayers. Many miracles are associated with his name. So people of both communities had equal reverence for him and used to approach him for favours. Whenever people gathered in large numbers, he would advise them to perform 'namaz,' preach to them and give religious discourses. Once the famous Tibetan sorcerer, Ne chug choe kyong, lost his costly rosary. The whole city was in consternation. When it remained untraced, some persons approached the 'peer,' who, after extracting a promise that they would not ask for the name or identify of the thief, closed his eyes, mumbled something and informed them that it could be found in such and such house in a particular direction of Lhasa and that dung was drying on the walls of that house and that the thief had hidden the rosary under one of the dung-cakes. The rosary was recovered from the spot.

■ Maulvi Munshi Bashir Ahmed

It is believed that he came to Tibet from India. He was a 'Hafiz' or one who knew the Quran by rote. He would often repeat the 'hadis.' A person by the name of Musa never said his 'namaz' and the people complained about him to Maulvi Bashir Ahmed. He called the man a number of times and advised him to say his 'namaz,' but the fellow did not budge. So he called him again, took him to a room and pointing with his finger towards a wall said, "Look there, if you don't obey, that thing will gobble you up." As soon as the person looked at the wall, he

gave out a shrill cry and swooned. When he came to his sense after a while, he had his bath and started regular 'namaz' from that very day. When people asked him what had happened, he said that he had seen burly bear with open jaws rushing at him.

There is yet another anecdote about him. One day some people were accompanying a group on a trip from Shakar-tse to Gyantse. As evening came, the caravan halted for a cup of tea. One of the travellers started speaking in glowing terms about the hot cake type bread of Shakar-tse and wished it could be readily available. Maulvi Saheb covered both his hands with a towel and intoned a few syllables. When he removed the towel, lo! there was the cake bread which he distributed among all his companions and all had a taste of it.

The invasion of Mirza Haider Gorgan of Tibet

In A.D. 1513 Sultan Sayeed Khan, the ruler of Kashghar, sent Mirza Haider Gorgan to conquer Tibet. Heading for Lhasa, he could not reach beyond Marbol and Naubrah (Askabog). He writes: "Tibet is so situated that, owing to the many hardships enroute, very few can reach it. Its mountains, passes and tracks are very perilous, and it is extremely cold. The people are primitive, unrefined and incontinent; highway robberies are common. Hence no traveller has ever reached there."

"I started towards the end of July of A.D. 1513, and reached Naubra on the first day of September. Naubra is a vast outpost of Tibet, and from there I came to Marbol. Lhasa is only a week's journey from here, but I could not proceed further because of the hazards of the road and many other troubles." This statement goes to prove that Naubrah, Marbaul and Askabarg were parts of Tibet at the time.

In 1682, when the Qalmaqas ruled over Central Asia, Khawja Afaq, whose tomb in Kashgharia is still looked upon with reverence, got annoyed with his Khan-Ismail (A.D. 1670-1682) and went to Lhasa. On his request, the Dalai Lama handed over to him a document with a route permit to report to Galden Boshokto Khan who, accompanied by the Khawja, attacked Kashgharia with his army, took Ismail Khan as prisoner and made Khawja the ruler.

■ The invasion of Wazir Zorawar Singh and Singpa Muslims

In 1814, Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir ordered his famous Dogra commander, Wazir (General) Zorawar Singh, to lead an invasion of Tibet. At the time, Zorawar Singh had no more than 3,000 Dogra troops with him. So he was joined by about four to five thousand Ladakhi, Urek and Balti soldiers to complete the expeditionary force. He conquered Gartok, reached Borang and established his headquarters in Tughlakhar. When winter receded, he intended to advance. In the meantime, Lhasa armies pounced upon him, and Zorawar Singh himself was killed on 12 Dec. 1814. The Tibetan troops not only captured a lot of arms and other booty but a large number of his soldiers as prisoners, and took them to Lhasa. Some of the prominent Dogra officers who were taken prisoner were,

1. Mian Rai Singh, the Deputy Commander
2. Sewang Stobdan Kalon Bargo
3. Phono Sanam Kalon
4. Ghulam Khan
5. Ahmed Shah, the deposed ruler of Skardu

■ Singpa Khache

After many years of confinement these prisoners were let out, and most of them stayed on in Tibet, embraced Islam and came to be known as 'Singpa Khache' or 'the Singh Muslims.' 'Singpa' in Tibetan is, in fact, a spoilation of 'Singh,' and 'Khache' is the Tibetan for a Muslim. Later on a large family comprising these people settled in Lhasa, and even today many among the Tibet Muslims are of 'Singpa' caste. Some of these people started selling meat, and a member of this group was especially appointed to supply meat for the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan government gave him the title of 'Jami,' the supplier of meat to the Dalai Lama. People belonging to this family still use the word 'jami' as their caste name.

Tibet had hardly any links with the Muslim world during the last few centuries but Tibetan Muslims, while on pilgrimage trips or on

trade missions, continued to visit Ladakh and India and thus benefit from scholars and saints there.

■ A meeting of Maulana Sayyed Ahmed Shaheed with some Tibetans

In his book, 'The Life of Sayyed Ahmed Shaheed,' Maulana Sayyad Bu-alhasan Nadvi writes, "In Shawal (May) 1236 Hijri, when he was on his way to the holy pilgrimage, Sayyed Ahmed Shaheed met some Tibetans in a house at Azeemabad. They too were going on Haj (holy pilgrimage). He inquired from them about the Muslims in their country. They replied that the Muslims were in the majority up to Second and Third Tibet and that in the rest of Four Tibet, the Muslims were in a minority and the 'Kafirs' in majority. Only some understood what 'namaz' or 'roza' (fasting) meant whereas most were Muslims only in name, and they worshipped the graves of the dead and peers (religious sages). He asked them if all of them had the wherewithal for their journey to and fro. They replied in the negative, but they had heard that everyone had a general invitation from him to accompany him, and therefore they too were eager to go." The Sayyed agreed that he had extended a general invitation to all the sundry with a specific provison, but it was not incumbent on them to proceed on 'Haj' as they did not possess the requisite provisions for the way. And a pilgrimage to the holy city (Mecca) implied God's consent (to do so). Now if they would not object, he would tell them of that which could be even more than twice beneficial than their pilgrimage. On their agreeing to further listen to him he told them to utter the name of God and place their hand in his as a vow, which they did. He then said that he intended to hand over his authority to them and make them his 'Khalifa' (religious envoy) and send them wherever he wished. They readily agreed to do his bidding, and he said that he would despatch them to their own country, give them the declaration to teach the Muslims the true tenets and save them from sin and damnation.

The Maulana further writes, "On return from Haj some Chinese and Tibetans met him in Calcutta. He inquired from them about their country and the state of religious faith there. They replied that there were many persons who went about preaching things the way he was

doing and that at least three of them had many followers although some people even tortured them and abused them. These people, however, showed great patience and exhorted the people to follow the path of righteousness. Who had taught them all this, they wondered."

Maulana Sayyad Ahmed then informed his gathering of the nine people who, after receiving the vows at his hands, had gone to Tibet; these included three women also. He spoke to them about their marks of identification, and the listeners said, "Undoubtedly these are those."

■ Late Haji Abdul Ghani Nangaru

He was one of the scholarly Tibetan Muslims. He was their 'Imam' (head or leader of the Faith) for a long time. In 1349 Hijri he left on his 'Haj' pilgrimage and was met on the ships by people like Maulana Ashraf Thanavi and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani. When the latter came to know that he was a Tibetan Muslim, they were highly pleased. Maulana-Thanavi gave him a copy each of his 'Islah-ul-Rasool' and 'Bahishti Zewar' and a translation of the Quran. On his return from his pilgrimage, he continued to instruct his audiences in the light of the teachings in these books. He migrated to Hejas with his family after the Chinese invasion and, after staying for a period in the holy city of Medina, died on a Friday in the year A.D. 1974. He was buried there in 'Jannat-ul-baqih.'

■ The migration of Muslims of Kashmir origin towards Tibet

The Muslim population of Tibet before the Chinese invasion of 1959 was about three thousand, and they were all of the Hanafi belief. They were very prosperous, happy and leading peaceful lives. About two thousand of these Muslims, the largest majority, were of Kashmiri origin. A section of them comprised Chinese Muslims and yet another of Nepali and Ladakhi Muslims. All these groups were living there as citizens of the country, and they spoke Tibetan.

History is silent as to when these Muslims came and settled in Tibet. However, the family elders, speaking of Kashmiri Muslims, used to say that a severe famine occurred in Kashmir once upon a time and

that was the time when large numbers of people from there migrated to neighbouring countries. One such group of migrants came to Tibet and settled there for good because the country appeared congenial to them. Moreover, Tibet had always remained free from state politicking and a life of worldly stress and materialism, and there were no caste or communal differences. They married among the locals, and their children were Muslim. Gradually, Tibetan became their language too. However from my research, it seems that many Kashmiri Muslims migrated to neighbouring countries during the Dogra rule when atrocities were committed on them. One such group of migrants came to Tibet. Although they became Tibetan citizens later on, racially, they were Kashmiris. The following facts confirm this view:

1. The Muslims in Tibet are called 'Khache' which is a spoilation of 'Khachad,' the Ladakhi word for Kashmiri Muslims. Thus 'Khachad' became 'Khache' in Tibetan.
2. Most of the castes among Tibetan Muslims are wani, nangrau, gamai, Battm Baba, Shaikh, Musli and Radauv.
3. The Kashmiri names for different 'namazes' are 'Subah' for 'Fajar,' 'pesheen' for 'Zuhr,' 'digar' for 'asr,' 'sham,' for 'maghrib' and 'khuftan' for 'asha.' The namaz timings in Tibet have these very (Kashmiri) names.
4. In Kashmir, at the time of marriages or other feasts, the system is to offer food in a large, engraven copper tray, which is shared by four persons simultaneously. This system was in vogue among Tibetan Muslims also.
5. Worshipping graves and tombs of dead saints is very common among Kashmiris. Even today, the 'Dargahs' of Hazrat Makhdoom Shah on Hari Parbat, of Baba Rishi in Gulmarg and of Amir Sayyad Ali Hamdani at Khanqah Mualla and Hazrat Bal Shrine attract large crowds of supplicant people asking for boons and favours. When somebody has his wish fulfilled he distributes yellow rice, or 'tehr' as the Kashmiris call it, in his mohalla (locality). Tibet too has many such 'dargahs' holy places associated with the names of various former (Muslim) saints, which people used to visit to pray for the fulfillment of their wishes. They would bring from there yellow rice as holy 'prasad' called 'man-jama.'

6. Speaking of Tibetans, Prof. T.W. Arnold writes in his book 'The Preaching of Islam' "Muslim traders from Kashmir have spread the word of Islam in Tibet proper also. Large groups of Kashmiri traders have settled in big cities, numbering about a thousand in the capital city of Lhasa proper. These traders go in for Tibetan spouses who often take to the religion of their husbands. However, the Muslims do not dare openly preach their religion for fear of Tibetan authorities."
7. Austen Waddle, in his 'Lhasa And Its Mysteries,' referring to Muslims, says, "The Muslims in Lhasa have a committee chaired by an aged, amiable and kindly gentleman who, though a Ladakhi, is actually a Lhasa citizen, having lived there for the better part of his life. He resides in a prominent bazaar of the town and enjoys the priviledges of an honorary magistrate for dealing with criminal and other cases of his co-religionists. Most of these Muslim inhabitants being Ladakhis and Kashmiris look Iranian, Turkish or Armenian in bearing. If you inquire from the details of the route from Ladakh to Tibet, their stock reply is that they did not enter via Leh or Ladakh but through the passes in Nepal."

After the invasion of Tibet by Communist China, this section of Muslims migrated to India and are now housed in a temporary colony in the Idgah at Srinagar.

■ Chinese Muslims

Next in strength to the Kashmir Muslims were the Chinese Muslims who numbered about nine hundred. They were migrants from Soothen and Silien or Houlin. The city of Soothen was considered very important agriculturally as farming was done extensively there. Hence all those Muslims who had come from there and settled in Tibet were mainly agriculturalists by profession.

Silien is also called Houlin in Chinese, and the inhabitants were called 'siling;' it is contiguous with northern Tibet and extends up to Kashghar. An independent government existed in this territory before Chinese occupation, and the population was entirely Muslim. After the

invasion, most of the people migrated to Saudi Arabia along with Ma-to-shi, their ruler, and they are still camping there.

Sturdy of physique, gentle, highly religious by temperament and true to their principles and plighted word, these people were very fond of meat. It was nothing for a foursome to gobble up an entire ram. Such of their clan as had settled in Tibet also mainly dealt with meat trade.

Other Chinese Muslims continued to stay in Tibet even after the Communist occupation.

■ Ladakhi and Nepali Muslims

These were the descendants of traders who had settled in Tibet a long time ago. Their strength was not large, and they still professed trade by and large. They had vast properties inherited from their forefathers and a large number of relatives in Ladakh. Therefore, they were frequently shuttling between Tibet and Ladakh. They were the most prosperous in terms of money and education of all Tibetan Muslims, and their relations with Tibetan nobility and aristocracy were intimate.

As for Nepali Muslims, their trips to Tibet were also occasioned by trade requirements. Most of them settled there but continued to maintain their links with Nepal. Even after the Chinese occupation, there is no restriction on their movement, and they continue their trade jaunts between Tibet and Nepal as before. After the Communist take-over, the Nepali Muslims settled down in Nepal.

■ Professions of Muslims

Tibetan Muslims were mostly traders. They owned large shops in Lhasa and other big cities. They mainly visited India for trade and brought with them Tibetan wool, musk, silajeet and turquoise stones and carried back cloth, sugar, shoes, leather goods and grocery items. In those days the journey on horse-back or on mule-back from Lhasa via Gyantse, Ngari, Thumo and across the Nathu la to Sikkim took eighteen days. The journey was difficult, arduous and dangerous owing to the presence of robbers and dacoits. Therefore, people travelled in carvans consisting

of a hundred to two hundred horses and mules loaded with goods. Men carried their guns and swords to defend themselves against possible marauders. Quantities of 'sathu' (barley flour) and dried meat were carried in sufficient stock so that they could out last all contingencies like bad weather and road blockades etc.

In addition to trade, Muslims had other professions too, but the majority of them ran tailoring shops. To whatever section of the community they belonged, all Muslims without exception led very happy lives in Tibet.

■ Legal concessions for Muslims

It is said that most of the Muslim settlers in Tibet had settled there during the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama. He not only allowed them to settle in the city of Lhasa but also granted them special concessions in law. Muslims continued to enjoy these privileges right till the time of Chinese Communist occupation of Tibet.

It has been heard from elders that the Dalai Lama also gave the Muslims a written document under his own seal and signature in which he had clearly stated that the Muslim settlers were outsiders who had come to his dominions and that in addition to granting them the privilege of settlement in the land we would also allow them immunity from certain laws which were applicable to Buddhist subjects. Hence the Dalai Lama gave them the following concessions:

1. The Muslims are allowed freedom to decide their own cases. For this purpose, the Muslim community would annually elect a five-member committee called 'Panch.' One of these elected persons was nominated by the Tibetan government to be the leader of the Committee, and he was addressed as 'Mian' by all Muslims. This Committee adjudicated on all issues pertaining to Muslims, and the Tibetan government never interfered with its functions. Even when a Muslim was found involved in some case of theft or quarrel, he was invariably handed over to this committee.
2. In addition to these, the Muslims are at liberty to open shops and practise business in other cities also, and no taxes will be imposed for this purpose.

3. Meat eating was strictly prohibited in Tibet during the month Saga Dawa considered as a very holy month for the Buddhists, but this prohibition was not applicable to Muslim who could freely eat meat even during that period.
4. During the twenty-day lama-rule in Lhasa every year, it was incumbent on the lay people to take off their hats as mark of respect for them whenever the lamas went round on their inspection of the city. The Muslims were free from the restriction.

Besides the above, there were numerous other concessions enjoyed by the Muslim community in Tibet.

During the time of Reting Lama (Rinpoche) (the ruler of Tibet), one of his ministers (who was anti-Muslim) Shadra Desyid by name wanted to have a look at the legal document issued by the Fifth Dalai Lama for the Muslims. The document was presented to him for perusal. He never returned it as it was allegedly destroyed in a fire. However, even in its absence, the Muslims continued to enjoy these privileges, and no Dalai Lama or government ever introduced any deviations. In fact, the Muslims were looked after well. Muslim leaders used to be specially invited to all important celebrations. Great festivities were held in palace gardens whenever the Dalai Lama shifted to Norbulingka, the summer palace. On this occasion, Muslim leaders were always seated in the row meant for nobles and aristocrats just behind the row for cabinet ministers. White turbans on their heads and robed in costly shawls these Muslims attended the celebrations, and they enjoyed great respect. Moreover, Tibetan nobles and aristocrats called Kudrag greatly loved Muslims and invariably invited their Muslim friends to marriage and other festivities and looked after them well.

■ Mosque

Muslims had four mosques in Lhasa, two in Shigatse and one in Tsethang. These mosques were very beautiful and they did not have any minar (tower) or dome. Two of the four Lhasa mosques were exceptionally beautiful: the Little Mosque and the Big Mosque.

The Little Mosque was situated near Lingkhor-Lingka and Zimshag Kusang tse. It was mainly the Kashmiri Muslims who performed their

namaz there. Most of the Chinese Muslims had their settlements on the outskirts of Lhasa and so were their mosques.

The Big Mosque was situated in the Thal-bung-gang locality of the Chinese Muslim settlement. Large and spacious and decorated with chandeliers and costly rugs, both these mosques looked magnificent. On one side of either mosque stood the 'madrassa' (school) building where little children could be seen learning the Quran. Besides these, two small mosque also stood in the respective cemeteries of Kashmiri and Chinese Muslims.

■ Madrassa (school)

Tibet being a religious country, both Buddhists and Muslims imparted only religious education to their children and were contented with it. The Muslims would first make their sons and daughters read the Quran and then taught them a few religious texts so that they could be conversant with 'namaz' and other rituals. To fulfil this objective they had two schools in Lhasa and one to Shigatse. The Akong Zakhang School and the Big Mosque School were the two schools in Lhasa. Both were located a little distance away from the city and had students up to fifth class by which period students were able to learn the Quran and a little of Urdu also. No fees were charged in either of the schools. A new student for admission would invariably wear a new dress on the day; sweets and small coins were distributed to children; the head-boy of the school stood up and prayed, followed by a chorus of 'amen' from other children. All expenses of the school were met through voluntary contributions. Some people who took the responsibility for looking after the school during the year were appointed 'muhtamin' or managers; they also visited the school for periodic inspections.

In the summer, children would squat on woolen rugs with low stools in front for keeping the Quran and other books. In winter, woolen rugs were replaced by animal skins which were very warm, annual examinations were held, and after the examination, a function for the distribution of certificates would be held in a big garden. Prizes were distributed to deserving students, and the audience was entertained to a sumptuous feast.

■ Grave yard

Lhasa had two Muslim cemeteries: Gyang-de Gang and Kuga Sha Gyang-de Gang, which the Muslims also call 'Baghlar.' The latter was located in an area of 1½ kilometres and 12 kilometres away from Lhasa in front of the northern gate of the Dalai Lama's summer palace, Norbulingka. There is a very large orchard full of various fruit trees. A canal of limpid waters meanders through the orchard. All Muslim religious festivals are generally held here, and they visit it for picnics also. This graveyard has some very old and high graves which, according to tradition, are considered to be of those of the earliest preachers who came to Tibet. Many are the anecdotes connected with this graveyard as is evident from its name. 'Gyang-de Gang,' in Tibetan means 'an arc encircled by an arrow.' Elders narrate that there was no cemetery for Muslims till the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama, and the dead were buried in a jungle behind the Potala, the winter residence of the Dalai Lama. When the Dalai Lama came to know of it, he felt a little surprised. At that time there lived a very holy Muslim elder who always remained immersed in god-realisation atop a ridge opposite the Dalai Lama's palace window.

One day the Dalai Lama sent his men with a mount to fetch the old man to his presence. When they confronted him with the request to accompany them, he replied that they could leave and he would come by himself. The Dalai Lama's men informed the man that as the track was perilous and difficult, they were leaving a horse behind for a convenient ride. However, the man insisted that they take back the horse along with them. Back in the presence of the Dalai Lama, the servants were narrating their story when, lo and behold, the old man appeared there from nowhere. Amazed at the miracle, the Dalai Lama entered into an intimate dialogue with him. The old man apprised him of the condition of his Muslim subjects and also referred to the absence of a proper burial ground for the Muslim dead. A few days after this meeting, the Dalai Lama shot from his palace arrows in four directions and told the Muslims to take possessions of the land encircled by his arrow shots. Ever since then, this entire land has been under the possession of Muslims.

■ Kiga-sha

Spread in an area of ½ kilometres, this second cemetery is located about 15 kilometres towards the north of Lhasa. It is the burial ground for Chinese Muslims. In a corner of this graveyard are located fourteen graves identical in shape. These are called 'Papa Chupshi' or The Fourteen Martyrs. The story goes that a group of Muslim preachers from Silin (Houlin) was passing through Tibet on their Haj pilgrimage to the holy city. These pilgrims, wherever they passed, continued their religious preaching too. When one of the ministers, Shita Detsen, heard of it, he ordered their arrest on various charges and put them to death. They had requested to be allowed to pray before their death, and the wish had been granted. It is said that they cursed the family of the minister to damnation. Hence, it is told, that whenever any person in the family reached a stage of progress and prosperity, he died of some mysterious and serious ailment.

Besides Lhasa, the Muslims had their mosques and schools in whichever cities they lived.

■ Muslim culture and customs

Although Muslims had become Tibetan inhabitants and had completely merged themselves with the atmosphere, they were living in great amity with their Buddhist brethren and they as strictly observed their religious obligations as the Buddhists. As there were no religious restrictions imposed by the Tibetan government, Muslims observed all their customs and ceremonies according to 'shariat.' Id and Bakr Id were celebrated every year with great gusto, and their Buddhist brethren were also invited to these celebrations. On the occasion of Id, Sahb-e-Barat, Shab-e-Mairaj and Id Miladul Nabi prayers continued day and night in mosques and private homes. From morning onwards, people would be visiting the cemeteries to recite 'Fateha,' and the visitors were provided food there on behalf of the Muslim Committee. Such events were called 'Urs.' Marriages were also solemnised in accordance with the 'shariat.' The custom of dowry was non-existent. However, the marriage feast lasted continuously for four days from breakfast till dinner. A variety of delicacies were cooked for the occasion. Everyone was uniformly dressed.

Owing to extreme cold, Buddhists and Muslims alike wore the long 'Chupa' which was secured at the waist with a silk band. This dress could wrap the body from neck to feet. It is called 'Chupa' in Tibetan. A shirt or a sweater is worn under it. Muslims used to cover their head with a Turkish (Fez) cap or a white turban or a conical Kashmiri cap. Youngsters mostly wore pants and coats; the old people donned big white turbans and women covered their heads with a scarf of silk or coarse cloth.

■ Muslim influence on Tibetan language, literature and art

Most of the books written in Tibetan are religious hymns, commentaries and expositions of religious themes. Books on literature and art are very few.

A Muslim, Fazlullah by name, rendered great service to Tibetan language and literature by writing a Tibetan work entitled 'Khache Falu.' He was a scholar, well-versed both in Tibetan and Persian. Mindful of the evils that had crept among his Buddhist brethren and unable to decry them openly, he resorted to the medium of verse to reform them and composed poems in an idiomatic expression. 'Khache Falu' or Muslim Fazallulak's personal advice became very popular and even today these idiomatic expressions are in common use among Tibetans. Actually, this book is a translation of the famous Persian book 'Gulistan-Bostan,' but he also made his own additions to the text. There were many Muslims who had mastered Tibetan because they had received regular education in Tibetan schools. However, they could not produce any book in Tibetan as such. The Muslims made a considerable contribution to the art of music, and there were leading sarangi and flute players among them. The late Muheeuddin, who was known as 'Mandi la,' was a Sarangi maestro; the late Mohamad Iqbal, known as 'Bai Iqbal' was an expert flute player; the late Izzat Bibi also known as 'Acha Azza' played on 'paya;' all of them were very famous in their day. They were regularly invited to functions at the residences of nobles and aristocrats. They even taught music to new aspirants. The play 'Sashi Blo' was originally staged by Muslim actors during the time of Reting Lama, and it became very popular. Later, after the demise of those actors, Buddhist performers

took over the stage. Even today a song titled 'Nang-ma' is well known among Tibetans. This name is, in fact, a spoilation of the Urdu word 'Naghma' which too was first sung by the Muslims. Similarly, Muslim contribution in other fields is also considerable.

Part III

Tibet Through the Mirror of History

Tibet Through the Mirror of History

Tibet, which is called 'the roof of the world,' is a vast and fertile tract, encircled by snow-clad mountains. However, it also possesses extensive plains, delectable valleys, lakes and rivers, and large reserves of mineral deposits. It is a country of great strategic importance in Asia because it can serve as an all round observation post.

The inhabitants of Tibet are a distinct race whose civilisation and culture, religion, habits and customs are entirely different from other people of the world. They have their own peculiar lifestyle. The country has a population of six million.

Five hundred years before the birth of Gautama Buddha i.e. in 1063 B.C. was born a great man, Lord Shenrab Miwo who reformed the savage life and ideas of the Shen race, founded a new religion and named it 'Bon.'

Bonpo legends reveal that eighteen Shang Shung kings had ruled over Tibet before the advent of King Nyatri Tsenpo, the first ruler having been Triwer Sergyi Jharuchen. Before its decline, Shang Shung was the name of a kingdom which included the whole of Tibet. The complete nomenclature, however, was 'Shang-Shung-Go Bha-Barsun.' The last king Shang Shung Ligmigya was murdered.

After the decline of the Shang Shung empire, came into existence the kingdom of Bod. The territories of Yarlung and Phyon Gyeso etc. also came under its rule. King Nyatri Tsenpo was the ruler at the time. He made many conquests and became the pioneer of a new type of government called Chos-gyal or the 'Rule of Religious Kings.' The Tibetan Kingdom expanded, and the whole of Tibet came under the sway of King Songtsen Gampo. The Tibetan era which is the basis of

the present day Tibetan calendar begins with the reign of Songtsen Gampo, that is 127 B.C.

This royal house of Tibet ruled for a thousand years. King Triwudum Tsen who is generally known by the name of Lang Darma was murdered in A.D. 842, Three of the kings who became very famous and are called 'The Grand Trinity of Kings' were Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Detsen and Ngadhak Tri Ralpachen.

During the reign of King Songtsen Gampo (b. A.D. 620) Tibet became a formidable military power, and its armies over-ran Central Asia. He introduced Buddhism from India and made it the state religion of Tibet. He sent Tibetan students to India for the acquisition of knowledge. His first queen by marriage was a Tibetan princess of the Shang Shung dynasty. Later he acquired two more wives, a Nepalese princess and a Chinese princess. Both proved instrumental in the spread of Buddhism and came to be looked upon with great reverence, Tibetan religious accounts always make a mention of these two queens.

During the reign of King Trisong Detsen (A.D. 755-797) Tibetan armies continued to invade China and in A.D. 763, after occupying the Chinese capital, took the Chinese emperor prisoner. A stone inscription-Zholdorin-to celebrate this victory still exists in Lhasa. It reads: "King Trisong Detsen besides being very intelligent, wise and learned was also a brave ruler. He succeeded in whatever work he undertook in the interest of his kingdom. He conquered large territories and annexed them to his kingdom. When he advanced on China over-running one fort after the other, the Chinese ruler and his ministers became scared and sued for peace. The Chinese monarch, He Hu Kiwang, agreed and continued to offer a tribute of fifty thousand rolls of silk. During his reign the first monastery, Samye, was founded by Padmasambhava. This king also expelled the Chinese priest Hoshang from Tibet and ended the presence of the Chinese school of Buddhism."

During the reign of King Ngadhok Tri Ralpachen (A.D. 817-836), the Tibetan armies also conquered many areas, and a Peace-Treaty with China was signed in A.D. 821. The text of this treaty is still preserved (as inscribed) at the following places:

1. Opposite the Chinese emperor's palace gate at Che Ang An.
2. Opposite the gate of Jokhang Temple in Lhasa.
3. On mount Gugu Meru at the frontier between Tibet and China.

Prominent Tibetan scholars like Kawa Paltseg and Chogru-Lui Gyaltsen worked in collaboration with Indian scholars. They compiled a Tibet-Sanskrit compendium of words called 'Mahavyapti' (Maha-vyutpatti).

Wudum Tsen Ralpa-chen (Lang Darma) ascended the throne in A.D. 838. He tried to revive the Bon religion, and many Buddhist monks were murdered. At last he himself fell to a monk's sword, and his kingdom was divided between his two sons. In course of time, nobles, aristocrats and army commanders etc. tried to grab power and gain an upper hand. As a consequence, the grand Tibetan empire became divided into fragments, and a dark age descended on Tibet from A.D. 842 to A.D. 1247.

In A.D. 1073 Kunchog Gyapo founded the Sakya monastery. His son and successors introduced the Sakya doctrine based on the lineage established by Sakyapa Kunga Nyngpo and founded by the great lamas Marpo and Drogme. Thus the Sakya lamas came to power and twenty Sakya lamas ruled Tibet, one after the other, from A.D. 1254 to A.D. 1350.

At that time the Mongols, who were over-running the countries of Europe and Asia, also attacked Tibet and reached Phapo to the north of Lhasa. Later on, the Mongol prince Godan Khan embraced Buddhism, and the Mongol troops retreated from there.

Kublai Khan was also won over to Buddhism by Sakya Phagpa, a Sakya lama. After embracing Buddhism, Kublai Khan conferred on Sakya lama Phagpa the rulership of the three Tibetan provinces of U-Tsang, Dote and Dome.

After the death of Kublai Khan in A.D. 1295 the power of the Sakya religious kings declined, and in A.D. 1350. Nedong Jangchub Gyaltsen, the governor, occupied the areas of Central Tibet. He was a leader of the Phamo Drup sect. So, for (the next) 86 years, eleven Phamo Drup lamas ruled over Tibet. However, after the death of Drakpa Gyatsen, the fifth Drakpa ruler, the reins of government went into the hands of the Ring Pong family which had been maritally connected with Drakpa Gyatsen. From A.D. 1436 to A.D. 1566 power remained in the hands of the leaders of the Ring Pong people. Prior to this, in A.D. 1357 had been born Tsong Khapa Lobsang Dragpa, the foremost

of Tibetan scholars. He also rose to be the most prominent of the Dragpa rulers. In A.D. 1409, he founded the first Gelugpa monastery, Gaden.

During the first decade of the sixteenth century, Tseten Dorje, who was a servant of the Ring Pong family, joined hands with some local tribals and the Mongols of Kokonor area and, with their assistance, occupied the provinces of Shigatse and Tsang. He also brought under his sway some other neighbouring areas. Thus, from A.D. 1566 to A.D. 1642 Tseten Dorje and two of his successors were the rulers of Tibet.

Sonam Gyatso was born in A.D. 1543. He became the head of Drepung Monastery and the most eminent lama of the day. He also became the spiritual tutor of Phamo Drugpa who was the ruler of Drakpa Jungnay. He rendered great help at the time of the great flood at Kyichu in A.D. 1562. In A.D. 1580 he founded the Kham Lithang monastery and the Kumbum in A.D. 1582. He brought peace to the warring tribes of Tibet.

In 1578, he converted the Mongol ruler Altan Khan Tomedi to Buddhism and the Khan conferred on him the title of 'Dalai Lama.' Thus Lama Sonam Gyatso became the third Dalai Lama. Friendly relations between Tibet and Mongolia were established during his reign. The foundations of the Gelugpa were strengthened, and it ultimately brought the end of the already declining Sakyapa supremacy.

In A.D. 1642 Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso was recognised as the fifth Dalai Lama. He became the founder of the current administrative set-up in Tibet. When this Dalai Lama had established firm control over Tibet, he advanced on China to invade it. Knowing of his intentions, the Ming ruler of China sued for peace and extended a welcome to the Dalai Lama befitting an independent sovereign. He came out of his capital to greet the Dalai Lama; he got a pathway prepared over the city fortification wall so that the Dalai Lama could enter Peking without having to pass through a gate. Thus the Ming ruler not only recognised the Dalai Lama as a sovereign ruler but also as a divine messenger on earth. As recompense, the Dalai Lama used his influence with the warlike Mongols to accept the overlordship of the Chinese emperor.

Another important event of the Fifth Dalai Lama's reign was the decree by which he made his spiritual preceptor, Choekyi Gyaltsen, the second spiritual leader of Tibet by conferring on him the title of the 'Panchen Lama' in perpetuity.

In A.D. 1683 was born Tsang Yang Gyatso, the Sixth Dalai Lama. He was a learned author and poet. He composed romantic lyrics and panegyrics in Tibetan. As he completely ignored his administrative duties, he was made to abdicate the throne. He died in exile in A.D. 1706 at Lithang. After his death the Dzungaria Mongols attacked Tibet and beseiged Lhasa. The Tibetans requested the Chinese Manchu troops who helped the Seventh Dalai Lama stop the Mongol advance beyond Kumbum; the Dzungaria Mongols were repulsed. However, when the armies of the Chinese Ka Ang Hsis went back, they left back in Tibet a nominee of the Chinese as Resident. This was the beginning of the Chinese influences in Tibet, but the Chinese representative was murdered after some years. The Chinese emperor Yung Chen ordered his armies into Tibet, and they entered Lhasa. This was the first ever Chinese invasion of Tibet. The Chinese now started interfering with the administration in Tibet, and in order to extend the area of Chinese influence, the Chinese emperor tried to enlist the support of some shortsighted Tibetan princes, noblemen and lamas by offering them the lure of various ranks. They accepted them not as a matter of any loyalty but out of sheer gratitude.

When the Chinese resident, also called 'Amban,' started interfering too much in Tibetan affairs, he was put to death. So the Chinese again attacked Tibet in A.D. 1749 and tried to spread Chinese influences to the maximum. In A.D. 1786 the Gurkhas invaded Tibet. In fact they had been invited by a leading lama in order that they could help him gain control of Tashi Lhunpo. So the Eighth Dalai Lama, who was then twenty-six, sought temporary assistance from the Chinese emperor Chien Lung, and the Chinese troops entered Tibet again in A.D. 1792.

The (Eighth) Dalai Lama had committed a great political blunder. The Chinese again started augmenting the powers and influence of their residents. One day Emperor Chien Lung sent a golden image (or urn) from Peking and announced that all aspirants for Dalai Lama-hood and other senior lama-hoods should put in that urn slips of paper with their names and lots would be drawn from these by a blindfolded person in the presence of the Chinese Resident. The Tibetans did not relish this extraordinary procedure, and they protested against it and rejected it outright. So the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was installed without Chinese approval.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama assumed the reins of administration at the age of nineteen in 1876[9]. At this time cordial relations between the British and the Chinese had been established. The Chinese persuaded the British to attack Tibet in order to increase their area of influence. To this effect, the Chee-Fu convention was signed between Britain and China on 13 September 1876 which gave Britain the right to despatch an exploratory mission to Tibet. However, the British had to abandon the plan as the Tibetans made a strong protest against it, and stiff restrictions were imposed on the entry of Europeans into Tibet.

Two other conventions were held later, the Peking Convention on 24 January 1886 and the Calcutta Convention on 17 March 1890. The Tibetans rejected both these conventions, and the Tibetan government refused to maintain any relations with the British government.

In 1901 the Dalai Lama sent a mission to the court of the Russian Emperor and later there was an exchange of letters and presents. As Russian influence increased in Asia, the British government felt alarmed. They sent an Expeditionary Force to Tibet under Younghusband who reached Lhasa on 3 August 1904. The Chinese government just kept mum and made no protest against this invasion. In the mean time, the Dalai Lama sojourned in Mongolia. At last, a Peace Treaty was signed between the British and the Tibetan government on 7 September 1904.

During the Monlam Festival celebrations of 1910, two thousand Chinese troops under the command of the Chinese General Chung Ying entered Lhasa and spread havoc in the city. This time the Dalai Lama shifted to India; the Chinese attempt to take him prisoner had been foiled by the Tibetans.

While in India, the Dalai Lama and his ministers requested assistance from the British government but in vain. In the meantime, the Chinese attempted to move the Chinese government so that Tibet could be declared a province of China and annexed. However, as the news of the Chinese Revolution of 1911 reached Lhasa, the Chinese troops revolted against their officers. Taking advantage of the situation, the Tibetans attacked the Chinese. Yuan Shih Ka, the Chinese general in Lhasa asked for re-inforcements from China, but none arrived. So he sued for peace with the Tibetan government through the good offices of the Nepalese ambassador in Tibet. The Chinese contingents had to quit Lhasa.

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9. "The 13th Dalai Lama was born 1876," *Tibet: A Political History*, W.D. Shakabpa and *A Cultural History of Tibet*, D. Snellgrove & H. Richardson

In January 1913, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama returned from India and declared the complete independence of Tibet and made it absolutely clear in his Declaration that the aim of the Chinese to make a colony of Tibet through their patronage of the lamas was now over.

A bilateral Agreement was signed in January 1913 between Tibet and Mongolia at Urge, the capital of Mongolia. This Agreement declared that both countries considered themselves as independent and separate from the Manchus.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama started forging international links. He introduced postal and communication services in the country and tried to mould Tibet into a modern nation. He died on 17 September 1933. A year after his death, a Chinese delegation arrived in Lhasa in order to settle the boundary question with Tibet. The original Chinese representative left after a few days, but a substitute for him stayed in Lhasa to continue the talks. He was also ordered to leave Tibet in 1949.

In September 1949, Communist China invaded eastern Tibet without any excuse.

On 11 November 1950 the Tibetan government sent a petition to the United Nations protesting vehemently against the Chinese aggression. The representative of El Salvador, a Central American country, raised the question of Tibet in the United Nations, but on a false assurance from the Indian representative, the General Assembly decided to postpone a discussion of the issue.

On 17 November 1950, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama assumed full powers as the ruler of Tibet.

After the Chinese invasion a Tibetan delegation went to Peking on 23 May 1951 to discuss the issue. It was forced to sign a Seventeen Point Agreement under threats and intimidation. Their signatures were obtained without the Dalai Lama's knowledge or authority. Even in this Agreement, the Chinese accepted internal autonomy for Tibet, religious freedom for the people and the continuance of the authority of the Dalai Lama.

Later on, the Chinese used this Agreement to justify their forced occupation of Tibet in order to turn it into a colony. The Tibetans opposed it tooth and nail, and by and by the Chinese repudiated every clause of it although it was already an unjust and unequal Agreement.

On 9 September 1951, thousands of Chinese troops poured into Lhasa and started destroying all racial, cultural and religious traditions.

On 10 March 1959, the Tibetans revolted against the Chinese, and thousands of Tibetan men, women and children were killed.

On 17 March 1959, the Dalai Lama left Tibet and sought political asylum in India. After that, countless Tibetans left Tibet and headed for India and settled there as refugees at different places.

China is still busy with its unholy and nefarious designs to convert Tibet into a colony, but the Tibetans have not yet lost courage, and they cherish a firm hope that the Tibetan nation will rise once again and obtain its rightful place in the comity of nations.

Part IV

The Chinese Occupation of Tibet and the Migration to India

The Chinese Occupation of Tibet and the Migration to India

The perpetration of atrocities and aggression is considered as the most heinous crime in the world but it is a strange tragedy of the history of man that the world has to live face to face with it as much as it is condemnable. Such atrocities are committed by every powerful and cruel person when he, for a moment, forgets that any power greater than he also exists in the world and that it has supremacy over all creation. Intoxicated with worldly name and fame and the greed for transient wealth, he not only forgets humanity and its golden principles but also becomes averse to the existence of this unseen power.

When we cast a glance over the history of the world, we find that this drama of aggression, atrocities and cruelties has been extensively staged in the courts of conquerors and imperial dictators.

History repeated itself, and in 1959 Communist China enacted its aggressive and cruel occupation of Tibet and 80,000 innocent Tibetans were pushed into the terrible abyss of death.

The Communists may repeatedly claim that they are the standard-bearers of equality and that they want to spread equality and fraternity in the world (by levelling the abyss between the rich and the poor) and that they want to lay the foundation of a social order in which all are equal and have equal opportunities of life and equal access to the means and facilities needed for a full life on earth. Such tall claims of the Communists are belied and will continue to be shown as false by daily observations, historical witnesses and by the land of Tibet soaked with the blood of 80,000 Tibetan martyrs.

The Kremlin Palace in Moscow from where Stalin perpetrated his atrocities and spread terror, the cruelties practised on their own people by Mao Tse Tung and Chou-Enlai by imposing the severest of restrictions on them and the land of Tibet where the blood of helpless Tibetans was shed and untold atrocities let loose on the populace are eloquent witnesses (of the Communist way). The innocent Tibetans had to suffer only because they tried to safe-guard their religion from communist onslaughts and they refused to accept the apparently pleasing and socially beneficial but ultimately harmful and ruinous system of administration of the Communists. Death and destruction were their only reward.

Historically speaking, the story of Chinese highhandedness in Tibet begins in the thirteenth century when the Chinese, under the garb of providing security, were able to take the lamas under their wing. It was a very clever move. Thus a vast area of Tibet from Mongolia came under Chinese hegemony because, religiously speaking, this entire area was under the Dalai Lama's sway.

The above arrangement continued till the eighteenth century. However, tension arose when in 1917 the Chinese tried to impose on the Tibetans a Dalai Lama of their choice. Feelings against the Chinese continued to run high from that moment till they were expelled from the country in 1911.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who is also called the Great Thirteenth and who was a great administrator, put Tibet on the tracks of an independent nation. During his reign, Tibet started minting its own currency, imposed custom duty, raised its own army and introduced post and telegraph and other services.

In 1950, Tibet lost its independence when Red China extended its powerful arms and took Tibet in their vicelike grip. No doubt the Chinese armies had to face token resistance in Tibet, but neither geographical barriers nor the warlike tribes which were the traditional buffers between China and Tibet could stop the onslaught of the highly trained and armed might of the Chinese army.

At the time the Fourteenth Dalai Lama was only sixteen. In order to divide and weaken the Tibetans, the Chinese used the Panchen Lama, the second highest religious dignitary of Tibet as a stooge.

The Chinese have a reputation for patience and steadfastness in the execution of their plans. They always succeed in their mission because

of their patience, determination, sedateness, hardwork and perseverance. They are never precipitant in achieving their goals. This is exactly how they functioned in respect of Tibet. Their sole aim of marching into Tibet was to take possession of the whole of Tibet, but herein they made use of their traditional patience and determination and declared, as soon as they entered Tibet, that they had come as good neighbours in order to strengthen Tibet socially and economically and to give impetus to art and culture in Tibet so as to help in its developmental plans. The Tibetans agreed with them, and China exported into Tibet in the garb of a strong cadre of educational and art specialists persons who could strengthen the foundations of Communism in that country. In a well-planned manner they started indoctrinating the children and the common people and, after some time, commenced interfering with affairs of the state.

In 1951, the Chinese made the Tibetan delegates sign under duress a Seventeen Point Agreement which gave control of Tibetan defence and foreign affairs to China. In return the Lhasa government was promised complete internal autonomy. The powers and privileges of the Dalai Lama would continue as heretofore. Tibetan religious freedom and rites would remain protected, and China would not interfere with them nor introduce any changes. Moreover, the Chinese government would extend all assistance to Tibet in social and economic fields.

Like all their military manouvres, this too was a highly tactical move. Their aim in occupying Tibet was to break up the monastic institutions and to abolish the landlord system because both constituted the foundations of Tibetan life. On the one hand the aim was to destroy the political and religious set-up of Tibet and on the other to grab the silver and gold treasures of the Tibetan temples and monasteries so that funds could be available for social planning and for feeding the Chinese who accounted for almost one third of the country's population. These Chinese had been willfully imported into Tibet so as to neutralise the Tibetan population. They were also to be given key appointments in all developmental works. The Tibetan tribals, who were nomadic but highly prosperous people, constituted a problem for the Chinese. They were forcibly herded together into permanent camps so that Tibetan herdsmen could stay close to the Chinese in order to supply to the latter their ample requirements of animal skins, wool, milk and such other necessities.

Tibetan farmers and tribals were brainwashed in order to persuade them to join the armed forces for the defence of Tibet. A section of the Tibetan society became influenced by these so-called 'golden' measures of the Chinese and the simple Tibetan folks were easily taken in. They took the Chinese for benefactors and so offered little resistance. After this, the Chinese started bringing into Tibet scholars and experts so that they could help complete national development plans. In reality, all these so-called 'experts' were, in fact, hard core communist functionaries who could propagate communism and entrench themselves in that country.

China kept its promise till 1956, but meanwhile, it continued to plan means by which its occupation of Tibet and its stranglehold on the people could be total. It constructed a highway between China and Tibet which could be of great military importance. When people inquired about it, it was given out that the road was being built to encourage trade and commerce between the two countries.

The construction of roads over, China knew it could now safely execute its designs and could fully overcome opposition if any arose from the Tibetans. After reassuring itself in this manner and providing for all emergencies, it began to unfold its real intentions. The aim was to establish its complete hold over the Tibetans' life and limb and their minds by destroying their religious freedom, customs, ceremonies and values. It started its game in accordance with a well planned scheme which it named 'The Long Leap.' A great political stratagem and diplomacy underlay the whole plan, and the innocent Tibetan masses could little understand the implications.

The plan had two parts: physical metamorphosis and mental metamorphosis. The aim of physical transformation was to make every citizen, big or small, rich or poor, religious or lay without distinction, do the meanest of jobs from carrying stones to cleansing feces with his own hands because all are equal without distinction. Whereas such ideas were sure to meet opposition at the hands of aristocrats and nobles and religious leaders, they found ready acceptance among the youth and the less cultured sections as a new and interesting slogan of equality. This would naturally divide the society into two groups (the pro-changers and the non-changers).

The aim of mental transformation was to make the people communist-minded and to drill it into their heads and hearts that if there were a system which could liberate man and totally identify itself with his aspirations and establish equality by removing class conflict and other divisions, it was the Communist System. Therefore, in order to put into practice its ideas, the Chinese opened new schools for universal education which gave financial assistance to the guardians of their wards. The poor ignorant masses could not understand the Chinese game, and they started sending their children in large numbers to these schools which were, in reality, centres for communist indoctrination. Children were given lessons in Communist ideology, and the system of their forefathers was dubbed as rotten. With a view to modernising the Tibetan youth and consequently weaning them away from their religion and traditional customs and ceremonies, they started sending large numbers of them to China on cultural and sightseeing tours. In China they tried to influence them with superficial shows and sights to prove that Communism did not prohibit the practice of any religion. Later on, an organisation was formed which aimed at propagating equality without discrimination. As a result, a large section of the Tibetan youth became the followers of Communism, and they started propagating against the traditional age-old customs and traditions of their own country. In schools and colleges also, communist indoctrination was done on young minds so that when grown up they should denounce their own traditional beliefs and accept Communism.

The Chinese also tried to forcibly dissuade people from performing their religious rites. Nobody was spared. If, on the one hand the Buddhists were prohibited from performing their modes of worship, on the other, restrictions were also imposed on the Muslims for performing mass namaz and other ceremonies.

When the elders, religious leaders and other eminent persons noticed adverse trends among the youth and this inclination towards communism, they strongly opposed it and stopped their children from attending those schools. At this the Chinese started torturing these parents in many ways along with threats and intimidation. Seeing this, the mass of the populace rose in revolt and within a few days the movement spread throughout the length and breadth of the country like a raging storm. Protest meetings were held, and processions taken

out at various places, and it was demanded that such schools be closed and people's religious freedom be restored.

■ The beginnings of mass unrest in Tibet

Immediately after the signing of the Sino Tibetan Agreement on 9 March 1951, unrest among the Tibetan masses erupted, and the revolutionary activities of the people in general entered a long-drawn phase. The rebels resolved to annul the Agreement and step up their rebellious and revolutionary activities.

On 9 March 1959, the Dalai Lama received an invitation from general Tankua San to witness a cultural show at the local Military HQ. It was also stated in the invitation letter that he should not bring his personal bodyguard or any minister with him. This extraordinary stipulation puzzled the Tibetan people because many respectable and eminent Tibetans who were not pro-Chinese had been invited to similar functions at the Chinese Military HQ and been either arrested or otherwise liquidated. The people of Lhasa were determined that no harm should come to the person of the Dalai Lama. Therefore, a crowd of about ten thousand surrounded the Norbulingka palace and prevented the Dalai Lama from attending the Chinese function. The people also decided to raise a band of people as the people's bodyguard for the Dalai Lama.

The monk who had brought the Chinese invitation was murdered that day, and his dead body was paraded in the streets and bazaars of Lhasa. Mammoth crowds of demonstrators appeared on the streets of Lhasa, and they carried placards with such slogans as "Chinese! Go back. We hate you." They were shouting slogans "We are not under the Chinese." "We want freedom" etc. The Tibetans also staged a huge demonstration in front of the Indian Consulate that day and appealed for help. The Dalai Lama appealed to the people to remain peaceful and announced that he was not accepting the Chinese invitation.

On 10 March 1959, the women of Lhasa held a massive demonstration in front of the Norbulingka. Some important Tibetans who were then in Kalimpong returned to Lhasa.

The situation deteriorated and went from bad to worse. On 11 March 1959 men and women together staged a big black flag

demonstration in Lhasa shouting slogans like "We are independent and the Dalai Lama is our ruler; we are under him alone."

On 12 March 1959, the movement spread far and wide, and 7700 lamas from Drepung monastery, 5500 from Sera monastery and 3300 from Ganden monastery also joined the movement and appealed to the people not to cooperate with the Chinese. The demonstrators' ire had been aroused to such a pitch that they murdered a pro-Chinese monk and dragged his corpse through the streets of Lhasa as a warning to those who had aligned themselves with the Chinese.

Between March 12 and March 17, 1959, unarmed crowds continued to pour into Lhasa.

The dramatic journey of the Dalai Lama and his companions towards India

Tension between the Chinese and the Dalai Lama had reached a high pitch by March 1959. During this period the Tibetans, especially the Khampas, had revolted around Lhasa against the atrocious and highhanded attitude of the Chinese. Therefore, in the Tibetan month of 'aswa nepa' which coincided with 17 March 1959, the Tibetan National Assembly and the Kashag resolved that the Dalai Lama should immediately leave Lhasa as they were apprehending danger to his life. Also so long as he stayed in Lhasa he would remain under tremendous pressure from the Chinese, and they would use him against public interest, and if fighting around Lhasa continued, countless Tibetans would lay down their lives for the Dalai Lama. So the Tibetan soldiers besieged the Dalai Lama's winter palace, the Putula (Potala).

Small groups of the Dalai Lama's entourage had started moving out from the Putala (Potala) palace towards India on 16 March 1959 itself. On 17 March, 1959, exactly at 10.30 pm the Dalai Lama along with his body guard left the Putala (Potala) by a secret passage, cast a last farewell look on his land and started on his journey towards India.

Far into the night on 17 March the Chinese lobbed two bombs into the Dalai Lama's palace, but both these fell into the lake opposite it.

After the bombardment, the Chinese found that neither had the Dalai Lama come out nor was there any sign of a surrender of arms.

They, therefore, concluded that he had already fled. Parties were despatched in different directions to trace out the Dalai Lama.

The Chinese now started hand to hand fighting and attacked the unarmed, innocent Tibetans with machine gun fire, hand grenades and mortar shells. Temples and monasteries and the palace of the Dalai Lama were their special targets. The whole of Tibet was in the grip of genocide, and it was hell in Lhasa like doomsday. Thus did thousands of Tibetans sacrifice their lives for the freedom and defence of their country.

Two days later the Chinese claimed that they had crushed the rebellion in which five thousand Tibetans had been killed and four thousand taken prisoner. However, the actual figures were far higher. One report claims that the Chinese continued to burn the dead continuously for many days.

On 23 March 1959, the Chinese announced to the Tibetan people through loud speakers, large posters and other similar means that the Dalai Lama had fled Tibet and it had come under Chinese rule now and that the communist law of China would henceforth prevail in place of the Tibetan laws in the country.

According to the Chinese News Agency, the Dalai Lama and his companions left Lhasa seven days after the Tibetan unrest started on 16 March 1959.

Gonpo Tashi, the Tibetan rebel commander had established his headquarters at Dodzong and was engaging the Chinese from there in order to ensure a safe passage for the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama and his party had to pass through snowclad hills and narrow and inaccessible passes and tracks which are only negotiable by yaks. The Chinese had deployed sufficient troops on the frontiers with Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and India. They had orders to shoot anybody attempting to cross the frontier. The Chinese troops had been asked to arrest the Dalai Lama and his companions alive and a strict eye was kept on Tibetan communication network. All letters were censored. Telegrams sent out of Tibet could only have the three words: "We are safe."

When, after a twelve-day perilous journey, the Dalai Lama and his party of eight arrived at the Indian frontier post, he was received with due honours by the government of India. His party at the frontier post

included his mother, two sisters and a younger brother. Seventy two others arrived later. Devotees fell prostrate before the Dalai Lama as he appeared at the three hundred year old Tawang monastery. The Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike gathered at this monastery, 12000 ft. above sea level, had tears of joy welling up in their eyes at the sight of the Dalai Lama. They lighted traditional lamps, and the monastery with lighted lamps in two rows became reverberant with the singing of holy hymns.

■ The Dalai Lama's statement at Tezpur

Making a very candid statement on his arrival at Tezpur, the Dalai Lama said, "China was trying to destroy the independence of Tibet by resorting to cruel and coercive means. Hence I decided to leave Tibet. It is, in fact, Lord Buddha who has saved my life. During the Lhasa disturbances the Chinese lobbed two shells into my palace, but they did not explode. Within a few hours of this, I decided to leave, and that very night we came out of the palace through a secret passage about at ten o'clock." The Dalai Lama further said that the Khampas had stepped up their activities from southern Tibet to Lhasa as soon as the disturbances had started, and the freedom fighters had planned massive demonstrations in Lhasa on 17 March 1959 so as to facilitate my escape.

He condemned the Chinese government and said that inspite of the 1951 Agreement guaranteeing complete internal autonomy and religious freedom, it started interfering with the internal and religious affairs of Tibetans. The situation had so deteriorated in Tibet vis a vis China that his stay in Tibet any longer was fraught with grave risk, so he had to leave.

Throwing light on the causes of the fire of rebellion spreading against the Chinese, he disclosed in a press conference at Mussoorie that as was evident from its policy, China wanted to completely destroy Tibetan culture in Tibet and alter the very ethnic identity of the Tibetan race. Referring to certain clauses of the 1951 Agreement, he said that the Chinese armies isolated the frontiers of Tibet and invaded it. The Agreement that came into being after the invasion was forced on Tibet under duress of military might, and the Tibetans had never voluntarily accepted it. The consent of the Tibetan government had been obtained

under the shadow of bayonets and that his representative had been forced to affix his signatures under the threat that in case of refusal the Chinese army would intensify its onslaught on Tibet.

The Tibetan revolt was, in reality, a national uprising against Chinese domination. The Chinese government had deceived the guileless Tibetan people by making tall promises; it had usurped its religious freedom and destroyed monasteries, tortured and tormented religious leaders, confiscated lands and completely decimated Tibetan culture. After crushing the revolt, communist China perpetrated such inhuman cruelties on the innocent Tibetans after the hostilities that one shudders to hear of them.

■ Chinese atrocities

At the outset the Chinese took over control of the means of communication and severed Tibet's links with the rest of the world so that no news about Tibet could filter out to others. They confiscated entire food grain stocks all over Tibet and, especially, the stores in Lhasa. Even the stocks in hotels were seized; all commodities from shops were removed, and the people in general were thus deprived of the daily necessities of life. As a consequence, the populace began to starve for lack of foodstuffs and other stores. When people demanded these, they were told that they could get cooked meals from specified shops instead of raw rations. So people would have to queue up in the early morning to obtain bread resulting in occasional fights. Political prisoners, hard-core criminals and goondas (imprisoned by the Tibetan government) were not only let out of jails, but most of them were also given responsible appointments, so that in addition to denigrating their own country, they could also wreak vengeance on those who had earlier punished them for various crimes. The result was that all those honourable men, aristocrats and nobles who had held eminent and responsible positions under the Tibetan government were now falsely implicated in cooked up cases out of sheer enmity by these hoodlums and criminals and openly humiliated and insulted. They were led, hands tied behind their backs, to a tall platform in the centre of the city square where people, forcibly herded together, were also waiting. Each locality had a committee for arranging crowds for such gatherings. The crowd asked, "Who are

those among you whom the person opposite (i.e. the hand-cuffed dignitary) has doled out injustice, treated unfairly, meted out punishment during his days? If there is any such, he should come to the stage and narrate his story, and the guilty will be punished today." At this, goondas and criminals and Chinese stooges levelled allegations against those nobles, aristocrats and gentleman and spat on them. They were made to stand with bent heads in the sun in this situation for hours, and many fell down unconscious owing to hunger and thirst.

Nobles, aristocrats, leading traders and respectable citizens were questioned in public: "From where from did you get all your wealth and property? Tell these commoners frankly today about all this." Now inspite of their honest explanations, they were forced to declare that they had amassed their wealth by depriving the people of their rights and deceiving them and that they deserved to be punished for their crimes. After this, stringent punishments were awarded to them.

Likewise, Tibetan lamas and religious leaders were also brought to this platform in the presence of crowds after having been already subjected to severe punishments. Here they were forced to declare, "Whatever we have preached to you so far about religion is a lie, a fraud. In fact, religion is a totally baseless thing, nothing but fraud and deceit." Then, they were handed over images and icons of gods which they were forced to smash in the presence of the gathering. Those who refused to comply were subjected to extreme physical torture and put to death. Thus hundreds of monks and respectable citizens ended their lives by jumping into the Brahmaputra and other rivers and lakes or committed suicide as chance dictated. This forced the Chinese authorities to post army guards around various lakes and rivers around Lhasa. Hundreds of those who were put behind the bars were murdered secretly after inflicting inhuman tortures on them. Sick of Chinese authorities and leaving behind all their belongings, all who could, fled. Thousands sought refuge in India. Reliable estimates say that 120,000 Tibetans were forced to flee their country during March 1959.

■ Migration of Muslims from Tibet

Even the Muslims were not spared because they too had completely boycotted the Chinese during the Revolt. They continued to take stock of the situation, and when Muslims of Kashmiri origin were thoroughly

convinced that communism was entrenching itself in the country, and that teachings of Mao and Chou Enlai were weaning away the children and the youth from religion and turning them communist minded and that it was no longer possible to safeguard their religion and belief by continuing to stay in the country, they decided to leave back all their belongings and migrate to India. They petitioned to the then Indian Counsel Mr. P.N. Kaul and to Mr. Chhiber that because their forefathers had been Kashmiris, they sought permission for them to migrate back to Kashmir, their ancestral country. Therefore, the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, requested China through diplomatic channels that these Muslims be permitted to come to India as they were, in fact, Indians. Rations were issued to the Muslims on behalf of the Indian Counsel, and after much ado, all of them were allowed to leave for India. However before they left, the Chinese deprived them of most of their possessions by imposing various kinds of levies, and Muslim leaders were thrown in prison for life terms after making different accusations against them. Some of those who thus became victims of Chinese atrocities and who were thrown into jails and never heard of again were

1. Haji Habibullah Shami. He was addressed as 'Mian' by all Muslims because he was the Panch or Chairman of the Muslim Committee. His shop was located below 'Simsha Kap Shapwa.' His only crime was that he was the Chairman of the Committee.
2. Baie Abdulghani las was highly educated. He was accused of inciting the people during the Revolt by writing various posters and pasting them on the walls.
3. Rapse Hamidullah had close links with Tibetan nobles and aristocrats, and he was accused of attending all those meeting which they secretly held.
4. Abdul Ahad was also charged with similar accusations.
5. Haji Abdul Qadir Jami.
6. Haji Abdul Ghani Thapchi Shawa-le.

Apart from these unfortunate prisoners, all other Kashmiri Muslims somehow left Tibet after leaving behind or disposing for paltry sums their property and possessions amassed over a lifetime. The Indian government welcomed them and housed them in a temporary colony

in the Idgah at Srinagar. Problems of livelihood took many to other parts of the country.

No doubt, these Muslims heaved a sigh of relief on arrival in India, but they are still not able to stand on their own feet economically for which they are struggling hard even now.

■ Atrocities on Chinese Muslims settled in Tibet

Timely intercession by India and the international situation made the Chinese allow Kashmiri Muslims of Tibet to migrate to their ancestral land, India. However, the Chinese had their revenge on those Chinese Muslims who had settled in Tibet for hundreds of years and who had no legal status to migrate to India and perforce had to stay on in Tibet.

The Chinese, with their traditional craftiness and deceitfulness, told these Muslims to dispose of their properties etc., and keep in readiness to migrate to some Muslim country. They felt rather happy at this for they knew that in a Muslim country their religion would be safe. So they sold off their pucca ancestral houses and all household effects, and they got money in return. But they had been cheated. Soon the Chinese turned them out of their homes and forced them to shift to tented accommodation in the burial grounds. What to speak of the Chinese promise of allowing them to migrate to a Muslim country; even the selling of food stuffs to them was now forbidden by a general proclamation.

For some days, they could somehow make both ends meet, but when their stock of rations finished, starvation stared them in the face. The so-called standard-bearers of equality did not pity even the children, and within a few days many died of starvation in the absence of any food or milk. The sick, the aged and the physically weak also died with pangs of hunger. It is also learnt that when these Muslims, enduring all kinds of privations and troubles for the sake of their beliefs, were drinking the cup of martyrdom one after the other, the Chinese seeing small children pining with hunger, would reproach them with such remarks as "God gives food? Now, call your God!" Many of the young thus gave up their faith and went over to apostasy.

Part V

Tibetan Refugees and Muslim Mirgrants: Problems and Difficulties

■ Tibetan Refugees and Muslim Migrants: Problems and Difficulties

When people the world over learnt about the Tibetan Revolt and the Dalai Lama's flight in March 1959, they were dumb-founded. The arrival of Tibetan refugees into Nepal, Bhutan and India, which was only a trickle prior to the Dalai Lama's flight, now swelled into a terrible flood. At present 120,000 Tibetans are living as exiles. According to a cursory estimate, 70,000 refugees are in India, 15,000 in Nepal, 5000 in Bhutan, a little over a thousand in Switzerland, two hundred in America, about 500 in Britain and Europe and the rest in the countries of South-east Asia.

Wherever the Tibetan refugees are, they are under the direct supervision of their government in exile which has its headquarters at Dharamsala. Its administration functions under a cabinet, the Kashag. The Secretariat comprises six departments: Education, Security, Home, Religious Affairs, Finance and Publicity & Information. It had a Foreign office too which has since been wound up.

The administrative staff is skeletal but steadfast, comprising about 200 officers who enjoy, however, the facilities of travel, telephone and housing. Surprisingly enough, the expenditure incurred is on the low side. There are two reasons for it: one, salaries paid to the administrative staff are meagre and they regard themselves as volunteers working for the welfare of their countrymen; two, everyone works over-time of his own free will because of his steadfast faith in the reverential links with the Dalai Lama. With the exception of Sundays, they hardly even take ten days' leave in a year.

Besides Dharamsala, Tibetan offices are located in three other cities: Delhi, New York and Tokyo. The entire business of administration is conducted in Tibetan.

The basic objective of this administration is to keep the Tibetan cause alive on the political plane and to look after the welfare of the Tibetans wherever they be.

In pursuance of the latter aim, the effort has been to maintain the cultural identity of the Tibetans by rehabilitating them at one place or engaging them in a trade as a group. What is the soul of this Tibetan culture which is sought to be preserved? Said the Dalai Lama in an interview:

> I feel that the spirit of Tibetan culture is that mental make-up which keeps them happy and contented in all circumstances. To be calm and to be full of friendly sentiments, to have a constitute Tibetan culture, a culture so useful for man in his daily life.

There are three ways in which this preservation of the Tibetan culture is sought to be effected.-

1. Maintaining full faith in the Dalai Lama and his government; no Tibetan has ever challenged its decisions. In order to maintain their government in exile, every Tibetan wherever he is, pays a minimum of one rupee every month although many contribute much more.
2. Wherever they may have settled and in whatever trade or industry they be, the Tibetans maintain close communal links with one another and lead happy and contended lives as they did in Tibet in days of yore, and in this manner, they try to preserve their cultural identity and individuality. Every colony has a representative of the Dalai Lama to help Tibetans solve their problems.
3. Religious and cultural institutions of Tibet have been revived on a smaller scale in India. Monastic Universities like those of Sera, Drepung and Ganden have been established in Mungod and Bylakuppe in Karnataka, each university having two monastic colleges. Besides these, there are other educational institutions also like Gyute (upper Tantrik College) at Bomdila

in Arunachal-Pradesh and Gyumed (Lower Tantrik College) at Honsur in Karnataka. The Astro-Medical Centre at Dharamsala serves as a Tibetan medical centre. Functioning on the pattern of the Chakpori Medical Centre, this institution prepares astrological Charts, the Tibetan Calendar, the Tibetan medicines. It maintains a Tibetan Hospital too, where education in Tibetan medicine is imparted through a 7-year course of studies.

The Namgyal monastery, the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts and the Tibetan Children Village in Dharamsala also help maintain and safeguard Tibetan tradition. However, the most important and the most significant of these institutions at Dharamsala is the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. Established a few years ago, this institution imparts education in Tibetan language and Buddhist Philosophy according to prescribed courses of study. Students from all over the world join these courses. The Library preserves thousands of objects of art and archival rarities and has more than forty publications to its credit.

Tibetan refugees settled in various parts of India are doing very well although in the beginning many could not cope with the extremely hot climate in India and died. Now most of them, especially those settled in South India, look very healthy. Those settled in colonies have taken to agriculture. They were initially given agricultural implements including a pair of oxen per two families and five bullock carts per colony for settlers in south India. Tractors have now replaced bullock carts, and maize, barley, ground nut and grain is grown by these settlers. When the crop is abundant, they offer a share of their earnings, by no means a fixed amount, to the Dalai Lama, the quantum being decided individually or family-wise.

Tibetan trade through industry has made tremendous progress in the production and sale of sweaters and rugs which are in great demand in Europe and America. Over the course of time, Tibetans have become somewhat prosperous and many are better off here than when they were in Tibet. On the other hand, Tibetan Muslims who heaved a sigh of relief on return to India and Kashmir, their ancestral land, are still comparatively down and out economically for lack of education and other facilities and for want of a well-organised institutional set-up.

They are at present housed in a temporary colony in the Idgah at Srinagar (Kashmir) which was built by the then Chief minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohamed with aid from the government of India. However, the increase in numbers has made it rather insufficient and hygienically inadequate. So a large piece of land behind Hari Parbat was made available by Sheik Abdullah for constructing a new colony. Plans have been drawn to construct a mosque, a school and a Tibetan carpet centre in the colony, and it is hoped that, with the help of the government of India, the state government and their own efforts, the Muslim refugees will have a bright future ahead so that they can also be able to serve their motherland as faithful citizens.

■ How Tibet has kept its political goal alive

Twenty years ago the Tibetan exiles had received large and ample sympathy from the free world. Today, there is nobody to raise a voice for their cause; they have been totally forgotten. However, the Tibetans continue airing their views on the international plane. They put the international community wise about the troubles and sufferings they had to face in Tibet and continue organising protest marches and processions. On 10 March every year they observe 'Lhasa Day.' In Dharamsala on this day, the Dalai Lama addresses a huge gathering in which Tibetans from all parts of the world participate.

The Dalai Lama and the members of his cabinet tour countries of the world where Tibetans have settled so that close links are maintained with them and proper guidance provided to them.

Educated Tibetan youth, a majority of whom have joined the Tibetan Youth Congress, a platform from which they express their anxiety over the Tibetan situation and organise hunger strikes and protest rallies have also kept the question alive politically.

Newspaper reports say that four Tibetan youth threw leaflets in the Indian Parliament in 1976 and in 1977 they sat on a hunger strike in front of the UN offices in New-Delhi in order to draw the attention of the world towards their quiet, non-violent struggle or to ask whether to convert it into an aggressive movement.

The Dalai Lama says that, with the spread of education, feelings of patriotism have taken deeper roots among the Tibetan youth. It is a

good augury. It is true that due to youth and immaturity they sometimes demonstrate a kind of impatience also but all that is just natural.

Today the Tibetans are nothing but pawns in the cold war. In the beginning, the Americans used them to denigrate the Chinese. Today, President Carter complains of the violation of human rights in Russia but does not open his lips about the human rights of Tibetans.

It is true that the Big Powers always keep their own interests paramount; it is also known to everybody that the Americans armed and trained the Khampa tribals (of Kham) who took up arms in 1959. They used to operate from Nepal but when detente started between the Chinese and the Americans, the Khampa tribals were totally forgotten and left to fend for themselves. Similarly, when the Chinese entered Tibet in 1950, the Russians supported them. But soon after the rift between China and Russia, all the latter's sympathy turned in favour of the Tibetans.

In brief, the interest of the democratic world in the Tibetan cause on the political level has faded out. The Big Powers now value Chinese friendship, and the Tibetans are a forgotten people today.

TIBET AND TIBETAN MUSLIMS

Tibet and Tibetan Muslims by Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi is the first ever book on Tibet that has been written in Urdu. The author attempts to illustrate historical accounts of the Muslims community of Tibet.

The initial section of the book is about the origin of the Tibet, its early kings, the emergence of the Dalai Lamas and so on. The middle section of the book narrates the propagation of Islam in Tibet and illustrates the harmonious co-existence of Buddhist Tibet with the early Muslim immigrants.

This book highlights how Islam as a religion was tolerated and sustained under a Buddhist nation.The community of Tibetan Muslims led peaceful and constructive life, and also contributed to the growth of the Tibetan societal development. The strong relationship between Arab and Tibet could be understood from the influence Muslim cultural had in enriching the Tibetan civilization.

The Muslim community of Tibet not only witnessed the brutal occupation of Tibet by the Communist Chinese but some of them have also undergone the same sufferings as the Tibetans. Through this book, Dr. Abu Bakr Amir-uddin Nadwi has made great efforts in highlighting the history, tradition and culture of Tibet and Tibetan Muslims.

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